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NEW DRAGON PANZER IV AUSF. H MID-PRODUCTION and WIRBELWIND

Dragon's newest 1:35 Panzer IV Smart Kit is a mid-production Ausf.H. Specifically, this variant was produced from September-November 1943. While it uses a good number of components from previous Panzer IV kits, there are also newly tooled parts to enable an accurate rendering of this Ausf.H Mid-Production tank. The air filter is located on the right-hand side of the hull, which required the kit designers to remake the hull plate, for example. Slide-moulded parts are widely employed, plus there are also photo-etched metal parts such including the side skirts to deliver true-to-scale thickness. This is another welcome arrival, allowing modellers to easily replicate a specific Panzer IV subject dating from the late 1943 timeframe.

Dragon has also just released a 1:35 scale plastic kit of the Flakpanzer IV Wirbelwind. The kit depicts an Early Production version of the anti-aircraft platform based on a Panzer IV Ausf.G chassis. All associated detail of the open-topped turret, hull and running gear is accurately represented. The kit utilizes Dragon's highly detailed 2cm Flakvierling 38 four-barreled weapon system. Individual Magic Tracks, plus some photo-etched parts such as the cage for spent shell cases, are included with this kit. Dragon kits are distributed in the UK by The Hobby Company Limited www.hobbyco.net



NUTS & BOLTS 27



2 cm Flakvierling 38

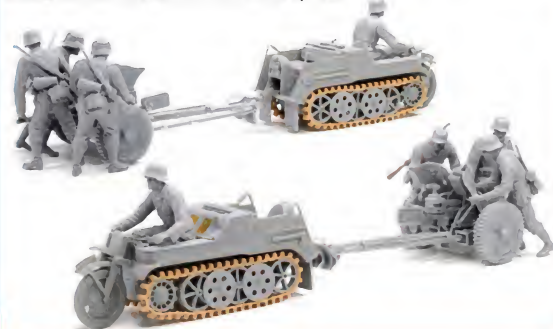
NUTS AND BOLTS 2 cm Flakvierling 38

Nuts and Bolts latest title offers an extensive technical description of the 2 cm Flakvierling 38 with a highlights on the sights used with the gun. The service history of the Flakvierling is also described with organisational schemes and historical photos showing the gun from 1940 to the war's end, together with a comprehensive review and example of the models available at this time:

Nuts & Bolts Vol.27: 2 cm Flakvierling 38 is available now. It has 160 pages A4, glue-bound, approx. 336 photos, of these 169 historical shots from manuals and during mission in b/w, a number of them previously unpublished; 149 colour photos of the surviving guns in public and private collections. The Nuts and Bolts team advise that their new website will be online soon at www.Nuts-Bolts.de

BUILT UP PHOTOS OF DRAGON'S NEW 1:35 SCALE KETTENKRAD

The Hobby Company has sent some nice built up photos of Dragon's new Sd.Kfz.2 Kettenrad Late Production & 3.7cm PAK 36 w/Crew.



NEW TITLES FROM THE OLIVER PUBLISHING GROUP

The Oliver Publishing Group has contacted MMI to let us know that their latest title, "Workhorse: The Panzer III In North Africa" by the very prolific Claude Gillono, is now available.

A number of other books are due in the coming months too. These include: Comrade Emcha. Soviet Shermans in WWII - Claude Gillono returns to take a look at the lend-lease M4 Sherman tanks that fought with the Russians in the last years of the Second World War. Featuring five pages of full colour artwork, black and white archive photos, tables of organisation for Soviet armoured formations and text. Blitzkrieg. The Invasion of The West 1940 - Using photographs taken by ordinary German soldiers, most never published before, this looks at the invasion of France from the German point of view. With artwork by a surprise new illustrator.

Stug. Assault Gun Units In The East, Operation Bagration To Berlin - As a companion volume to the very popular release, To The Last Bullet Part.I, this book examines the units equipped with the Sturmgeschuetz III and IV during the last year of the war on the Eastern front. With 17 pages of colour illustrations depicting over 50 different vehicles, archive photos and unit histories. Let's hope that The Oliver Publishing Group continues their association with Bison Decals for some interesting marking options from these titles!



HENSCHEL 33 D1 TRUCK IN 1:35 FROM ICM

ICM has really lifted its game in the last few years, and they seem to have given special attention to German WWII trucks.

ICM's next cab off the rank (soft-top metal cab in this instance) is the Henschel 33 D1 truck in 1:35 scale. In production from 1934 until 1942, the 33 D1 was widely used by all arms of the German services, and on all fronts with a total of 22,000 being produced.

This is the first time that a plastic kit of this important vehicle has been produced in 1:35 scale, and if ICM's recent truck releases are a guide, this should be an impressive kit!

Thanks to ICM for the information and image www.icm.com.ua



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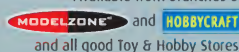


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Build Your Dream!





This line-up shows the development of Soviet tanks at the beginning of WWII. From the left: BT-7M, A-20, T34/76 Model 1940, T34/76 Model 1941. The A-20 was intended as a light tank to replace the BT-7, but was replaced by the heavier A-32.

T-34/76 MEDIUM TANK

Bruce Culver describes the development and deployment of the Soviet T-34/76 Medium Tank.

While the Soviet Union was often derided by European countries as a poor and backward country, in many respects it was at the forefront of modern research and design. The Soviet government had a long-standing interest in catching up to the west in military power, and conducted many development programs to improve the quality and effectiveness of its military forces. Among these were several tank development projects.

THE NEED FOR MODERN ARMOUR

When the Spanish Civil War started in 1937, Russia sent a number of tanks and aircraft to assist and reinforce the Republican army and air force. Germany and Italy did the same, but supported the Nationalist forces of Generalissimo Franco. This war turned out to be a rehearsal for the greater conflict to come, and many valuable lessons were learned. The Russians found that their T-26 and BT-7 light tanks were so lightly armoured that they were no match for any of the contemporary anti-tank guns and thus were essentially obsolete.

In 1937, the Soviets started several new programs to design new tanks. One such project was the A-20, designed by a team headed by A. Firsov at the Kharkov Locomotive Plant. The requirement was for a light tank with 20mm of armour, but the armour was sloped

all around the hull and turret to provide more protection than the basic thickness would indicate. The A-20 retained the chassis and convertible wheel-track suspension of the earlier BT-7 and had a 45mm gun as the main armament. The A-20 armour layout owed much to the pre-war BT-SV project, which had introduced dramatically sloped armour.

While testing was satisfactory, it was obvious the A-20 was going to be under-armoured. In 1937, one of Stalin's dreaded purges struck when Firsov and most of his design team at the Kharkov plant were arrested, halting work on the A-20. Mikhail Koshkin, a young engineer from the Leningrad heavy tank design bureau, was brought in to resume work on Firsov's projects.

A-32 DEVELOPMENT

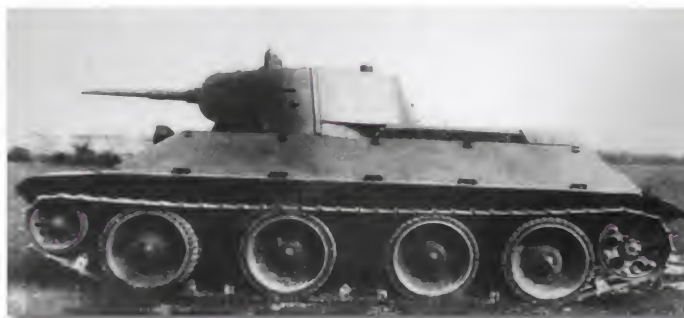
A number of engineers had doubts about the value of the convertible suspension of the BT series, and the proposed A-20, and so Koshkin proposed a new design, heavier than the A-20 but retaining the sloped armour. Frontal armour was increased to 32mm and the armament was to be a short-barrelled 76mm gun. Koshkin named the new design A-32 after the front armour thickness. The A-32 was considerably larger than the A-20 and had a Christie suspension with five large road wheels on each side. The hull was

longer and wider than the A-20, and the turret was an enlarged development of the A-20 turret. The tracks were wider than those for the A-20.

In view of complaints of inadequate armour protection from Soviet tank commanders who had fought in Spain, Stalin agreed to the construction of both the A-20 and A-32 prototypes and these were completed by the summer of 1939. Testing at Kubinka showed both tanks had similar automotive performance, so the A-32 was favoured because it had heavier armour and a better gun for the same capabilities.

Stalin and the senior military council decided the A-32 was the better design and authorised further development for production. Koshkin's team

made a number of changes, increasing frontal armour to 45mm, redesigning the turret and mounting the better L-11 gun, and widening the tracks even more. Two prototypes appeared in January 1940, and were driven from Kharkov in Ukraine to Moscow and then Finland, then back to Kharkov to demonstrate the reliability of the new design. Koshkin had named the new tank "T-34" after the date of the Soviet decision to expand Russia's armed forces, and his own first concepts for the tank. Regrettably, Mikhail Koshkin contracted pneumonia as a result of the long demonstration drive and died in September 1940, never seeing the final tremendous value of his development. He was replaced by Aleksandr Morozov.



The A-20 prototype retained the BT-7's convertible road-track suspension with front steerable wheels. The maximum armour was only 20mm, far too thin to be effective against even late pre-war anti-tank guns. The sloped armour was, however, more effective than the earlier vertical plates of the BT-7.



Another shot of the A-20 shows the noticeable sloping of the hull armour, which was not only more effective, but simplified production by reducing the number of plates in the hull. The basic shapes of the hull and turret were carried over to the T-34 series.



The A-32 was designed by Mikhail Koshkin as a heavier, better protected alternate to the A-20. Frontal armour was 32mm, but the sloped glacis had an effective thickness much greater. This was the basic design concept for what became the T-34.



Taking the A-32 design, Koshkin added more armour and widened the tracks for better floatation to produce the prototype T-34 medium tank. Frontal armour was 45mm. Note the smooth plate type tracks.



This is the T-34/76 Model 1940 armed with the 76mm L-II gun. Early production T-34s were built and finished to a high standard. The L-II's recoil mechanism was above the barrel, requiring the prominent bulge in the mantlet.

THE T-34 EVOLVES

Almost unbelievably, political manoeuvring resulted in a year's delay in bringing the T-34 to full production. Only 115 of 600 T-34s ordered were delivered by the end of 1940. There was also an attempt to develop a better alternative, replacing the Christie spring suspension with a torsion bar type, installing a larger three-man turret, and increasing the armour thickness. This was designated as the T-34M. It never entered production, being cancelled at the start of the German invasion in June 1941.

At the same time, others were trying to correct some of the more serious shortcomings of the new design. The L-11 gun proved to be inadequate and the artillery development team led by V. Grabin began work to adapt the new F-32 76mm gun in the KV-1 heavy tank to mount it in the T-34. The result of this work, the F-34 76mm/L42, was complete by the end of 1940. Unable to get permission to produce this better weapon, Grabin's plant proceeded to produce the gun without authorization and so F-34s were available at the start of 1941. As a stopgap, a number of T-34 Model 1941 and 1942 vehicles were fitted with the excellent 57mm ZIS-4 or ZIS-4M long-barreled anti-tank gun, and used as tank destroyers. A total of 324 T-34/57 tanks were built and converted from 1941.

The T-34 Model 1941 introduced the 76mm F-34 gun in a new mantlet, and gained considerable firepower, though the F-34 could not penetrate the heavier German tanks at long ranges. The turret had two serious disadvantages: the two-man layout meant that the tank commander also had to be the gunner, distracting him from his primary role as vehicle commander, and the very large roof hatch was difficult to raise and lower, and required the commander to expose too much of his upper body to see over it.

BARBAROSSA

The German invasion, Operation Barbarossa, was a stunning surprise to the Soviet leadership, and the swift advances made by the German army swept up thousands of Russian tanks and guns and millions of soldiers in just a few months. The Germans captured whole armies in just weeks and also threatened Russian factories.

The Kharkov tank plant was moved to Nizhny Tagil in the Urals in 1941 to escape the German invasion. The tooling for the rolled ▶



Think Tank - T-34/76 Medium Tank



In spite of its very real technical advantages over all the 1941-vintage German tanks, the T-34 did not do well in the 1941 fighting during Operation Barbarossa. Extensive purges in the late 1930s had robbed the Soviet army of 90% of its field grade officers, leaving mostly political commissars and inexperienced junior officers to fight against the best-trained army in the world. Ineffective armour tactics and excess caution led to the loss of thousands of otherwise decent tanks like this T-34/76 Model 1940, bogged down in a marsh and picked off by better-led German tank units.



T-34/76 Model 1941 tanks traverse muddy ground during Barbarossa. These early tanks have the original design rolled plate welded turrets with large roof hatches and the F-34 gun. The wide tracks gave the T-34 considerably better ground flotation than other tanks.



The Germans destroyed or captured hundreds of T-34s like this Model 1941, burned out and still smouldering. Note the unditching log carried on the opposite side of the hull. The T-34/76 was a very nasty surprise to the Germans, who were completely unaware it existed, even though LIFE magazine photographer Margaret Bourke-White had photographed a T-34 production line in late 1940.

“The arrival of the KV-1 heavy tanks and the T-34/76 medium tanks came as a complete surprise to the commanders of the panzer armies charging into Russia in the summer of 1941...”

This T-34/76 Model 1941 shows a major disadvantage in the turret design. The large single roof hatch was very heavy and difficult to move and, while providing a good deal of cover for the tank commander, it also blocked his view forward, forcing him to expose his whole upper body to see over the hatch. Later turrets had smaller hatches.





This T-34/76 Model 1942 in Stalingrad in late 1942 was knocked out by a shell penetration through the nose armour, which was only 45mm thick. The Stalingrad Tank Factory continued building T-34s until October 1942, when the city was surrounded.



T-34/76 tanks here escort infantry at a walking pace, providing cover and support fire. The Soviet army took several years to develop more effective tank-infantry tactics, as the Germans often inflicted very heavy casualties on the tanks and infantry early in the war.



The Russian forces did not have many armoured personnel carriers or enough trucks to carry infantry into action with the tanks, so it was common for Russian infantry to ride the tanks into combat, then dismount and fight enemy infantry when they got close to the German lines. The Germans countered this by using heavy machine guns (MG34s and MG42s on tripods) to rake the Russian tanks and strip off the tank-riding infantry.



German forces in 1941 and 1942 captured hundreds of Russian tanks, including large numbers of the T-34/76 like this Model 1941. Because of the distinctive silhouette of the T-34, the Germans used over-sized markings and flags to identify the tanks as friendly to the Luftwaffe. Friendly fire was a major concern in using captured enemy equipment.

◀ plate turrets was lost temporarily, so the plant developed a 52mm thick cast turret to use until the welded turret line could be restored. This cast turret was used on a large number of the 1941-42 models.

Many other Soviet tank factories had to be moved on short notice and production had to be expanded as well. The wholesale evacuation of whole industrial centres, often with minimal loss of production, ranks as one of the greatest industrial planning achievements of the war. The relatively short-ranged Luftwaffe, intended as a tactical rather than a strategic air force, could not reach the new weapons factories in the Ural mountains, ensuring that mass production could continue with few interruptions.

One result of the dispersal of Soviet factories, and the expansion to more plants building the T-34 was a considerable number of detail variations in how the tanks were assembled and what they looked like when complete. There were many variations in castings and machining of the major components, different combinations of parts in assembled tanks, and unusual methods of fabrication. One factory kept building the Model 1942 turret after the introduction of the Model 1943, assembling both on the same line as turrets became available. One thing that did disappear was the excellent finish and level of craftsmanship that had characterised the pre-war manufactured T-34s that were finished to western standards. However, none of this affected the combat-worthiness of the tanks, only the appearance.

The arrival of the KV-1 heavy tanks and the T-34/76 medium tanks came as a complete surprise to the commanders of the panzer armies charging into Russia in the summer of 1941. Perhaps it should not have been such a shock since famed LIFE photographer Margaret Bourke-White had photographed a T-34 production line in 1940, with the photographs published in LIFE. It turned out that German intelligence was well aware of the existence of the T-34, but failed to pass on the information to the tank troops or their commanders, so the technical prowess of these two weapons came as a great shock to the troops in Pz.Kpfw. IIIs and IVs who met up with the KV-1 and T-34.

There were immediate demands to have the Soviet tanks, especially the T-34, copied and produced for German use. To their chagrin, ▶



Think Tank - T-34/76 Medium Tank



Another captured T-34/76 Model 1941 shows the usefulness of mudguards – note the huge amounts of mud thrown up on the rear hull sides while this tank has traveled through muddy terrain. Like the BT-7, the T-34 had flimsy mudguards easily lost.



The T-34/76 Model 1942 had a number of detail changes primarily to the hull and suspension. This Model 1942 shows the new patterned tracks to improve traction in mud. The driver had a revised front hatch, and often the second periscope for the loader was deleted, as on this example. The thicker side armour was not noticeable to enemy gunners.



T-34/76 Model 1942 lined up in a tank brigade show presentation and patriotic markings. Many T-34s were donated by companies, cities and towns, even churches, to support the defence of Russia from the German invaders. Many independent tank units also sported prominent markings on their tanks.



T-34/76 Model 1942 tanks were painted white in the winter, and fresh snow covering the paint heightened the camouflage effect. Note the muddy trail on the glacis where the driver left and entered his position through the front hatch.

◀ the German panzer and industrial leaders who examined the T-34 found that German industry did not have the capability to produce the large cast aluminium engine block of the V-2 diesel engine, nor could they manufacture the light metal casing for the rear-mounted transmission. Thus, direct copying of the T-34 was never possible, leading the Germans to design what would be considered the best medium-heavy tank of the war, the Panther.

EARLY FAILURES

If the T-34/76 was such a shock to the Germans, and had such technical advantages over most German tanks in 1941, why did the Russian tank forces fare so poorly early in the war? The answer is as tragic as the huge loss of life in the Soviet Union, which suffered possibly half of all casualties suffered in WWII. All of Russia had to live under the rule of Josif Stalin, a leader infamous for his mercurial temper and rampant paranoia. In 1937-38, Stalin feared the military leadership and purged the Red Army of over 90% of its field grade officers (colonels and generals), most of whom simply disappeared. This left the Red Army with very few experienced senior officers.

To make matters worse, Stalin then assigned political commissars to oversee the remaining officers, often with the power to overturn military decisions if they didn't meet political objectives. Then, the harsh "justice" meted out to some early war leaders who had tried to do something after the German invasion led many of the remaining officers to wait for orders from Moscow before doing anything. The suddenness of the German assault shocked Stalin, who retreated to his Kremlin apartment for several days, essentially leaving Soviet forces leaderless. This very early period is when the Red Army suffered many of its greatest losses.

GENERAL WINTER AND T-34 SUPREMACY

In spite of the great defeats of 1941, the Russians held, aided by their most capable leader, "General Winter". The horrible weather through the end of 1941 and into 1942 stopped the German advances and allowed the Russians time to replenish equipment and train troops. Many of the Russian soldiers in the summer of 1941 had never seen a tank before being sent out in them to fight the best-trained army in the world, with only a very few hours of familiarization and no real experience. ▶



The Soviet command recognized early in the war that the frontal armour of the T-34 was vulnerable, and while thicker production armour would take time, appliqué armour plates could be added to older tanks to upgrade them. This T-34/76 Model 1941 has received a full set of front armour appliques at the factory in Leningrad. The turret has its own set of extra armour plates, covering the entire front.



This T-34/76 Model 1942 has a different set of appliqué armour plates. The different factories often developed their own designs for the extra armour. On these tanks, the turrets have not been modified. Again, the rather weak mudguards have disappeared.



During the war, in Barbarossa and again later in 1943-44, the Russians attempted to create a tank destroyer version of the T-34/76 mounting the excellent ZIS-4/4M 57mm high velocity anti-tank gun. Only 324 were manufactured, as the T-34/85 appeared in late 1943, with better performance than the 57mm gun version.



A German convoy passes this abandoned T-34/57 during the winter of 1942. The only major identification feature of this model was the very long slender main gun barrel. This tank was based on the 1942 model of the basic T-34 – note the round transmission hatch in the hull rear plate.



In late 1942, a number of improvements to the T-34 were adopted. Among these was this new hexagonal two-man turret, with more interior room and smaller roof hatches. The improved tank was designated T-34/76 Model 1943.



The first version of the Model 1943 turret had two round hatches in the roof. Note the flat turret front and the large rounded gun mantlet. The crew wears the standard tankers' blue uniform and the ubiquitous padded cloth helmet.



Think Tank - T-34/76 Medium Tank



On the next version of the Model 1943 turret, the commander had a cupola for protected observation and the loader retained his round hatch in the forward turret roof. Note the tank commander's signal flags – for much of the war, only command tanks had radios.



Here is a better view of the new Model 1943 turret with the cupola and large gun mantlet. Although still a two-man turret, it allowed more room to work and so improved crew performance. This version was a casting with the roof welded in place.



In spite of the danger to tank-riding infantry, for most of the war, Russian infantry did ride the tanks to provide support and cover for the armoured units. And when crossing rivers or other obstacles, the tanks proved invaluable. Here a white T-34/76 Model 1943 provides ferry service for Russian troops.



Looking like a scene from a Serge Eisenstein war film, this T-34/76 Model 1943 carries tank-borne infantry past a burning Tiger I. This tank carries white camouflage only on the front. This dramatic scene presents a fitting end to this study of one of the most influential tanks of World War II.

As the war progressed, Morozov's team made further improvements to the T-34, though the primary effort was expanding production to make up for losses and equip all the new armour units being formed. The primary change in 1942 was to adapt the larger turret from the cancelled T-34M project and fit it to the T-34/76, creating the T-34/76 Model 1943. The new turret was hexagonal in shape. It was still a two-man turret, but now had much more working room for the commander and loader. Early Model 1943 turrets had two round roof hatches for the commander and loader but shortly a cupola was added for the commander, giving him somewhat better vision around the tank.

Most of the Model 1943 turrets were cast with the rolled roof plate welded in place. However, the Uralmash plant had a huge 5,000-ton drop forge and formed their turret shells from rolled plate. The resulting turrets looked like deep turtle shells, very round instead of having a sharp edge where the roof was welded into the cast shell.

Through 1942-43, the T-34/76 provided the Red Army with an excellent medium tank capable of prevailing much of the time, more often when used in large numbers. Because of the increasing efficiency of Soviet production, the Red Army had the numbers it needed to drive the Germans back toward Germany, though losses continued to be enormous. The tank-riding infantry often suffered the highest losses.

With the introduction of the superior T-34/85, the T-34/76 was no longer the most effective or important tank the Russian forces had. The still-high attrition and winding down of T-34/76 production resulted in fewer and fewer of the old tanks remaining in active service. Some were converted to tow vehicles, but many were scrapped after the war, when they were all taken out of service. Hundreds still serve on concrete plinths as memorials to those who lost their lives in what was the most destructive war in history.

The legacy of the T-34 lives on in most of the main battle tanks used around the world. The basic layout of the T-34 – good armour, a good gun, manoeuvrability, good flotation, speed, the engine and power train all in the hull rear, wide low silhouette, and an adaptable design that can be modified easily as needed – these were the influences pioneered by this most useful of WWII armoured vehicles. ■

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RED DAWN

Luke Pitt takes the best of both worlds from the Tamiya and HobbyBoss T-34 kits, adding a few touches of his own for an ambitious kitbash in 1:48 scale.





The author used the Verlinden update on this build. A complete lower hull casting is included with this update.

The Russian T-34 was one of the all-time classic tank designs. When the previously successful German army came into contact with them in 1941 it caused more than a little trepidation for the German general staff. The design effectively outclassed all their tanks in one go. It was even suggested that a faster way to counter it was to copy it. The MAN design for the Panther was little more than a warmed over T-34.

The dawn of the modern Russian tank had begun. The initial design did have a great number of failings however, many due to its production process and the most glaring, a two man turret.

The motivation for this build had its genesis well over six years ago when the Tamiya kit was first released. I had started to scratch build the lower hull for the Tamiya kit with the aim of producing a complete interior. Verlinden then produced an interior (item no. 2249) that was, quite frankly better than mine and to cap it off HobbyBoss announced multiple kits of the T-34 with complete interiors. The motivation had gone and I shelved the project.

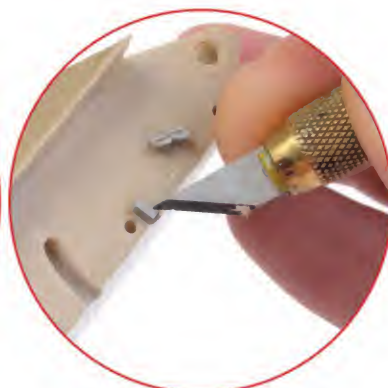
Fast forward, five and half years. I tend to be a magnet to people that may be closet modellers, (most of these guys tend to collect kits without ever building them). For whatever reason, a gent that I work with approached me one day and said he was clearing out his shed and had a number of plastic kits he was going to take to the tip. He informed me that I was welcome to them if I wished. When we opened the boot of his car, there were the usual suspects, half built car and ship kits, but there also were a few half-started 1:48 scale armour kits. Amongst them were three of the HobbyBoss kits. I grabbed those with the intention of looking the kits over. ►



The author has mated the Tamiya rear plate to the Verlinden lower hull. Plastic card has been glued to the Verlinden hull to hide any casting imperfections. The transmission covers have also been beefed up with Milliput.



The HobbyBoss hull hardware was cut off...



...and then reapplied to the Verlinden Lower hull.

◀ TAMIYA AND HOBBYBOSS T-34S IN BRIEF

The Tamiya kit has some 130 parts moulded in olive plastic and is presented in a very attractive black bordered box with a first class and technically correct illustration on the top. The hull is cast in metal and is already primed in grey. The detail level on all plastic parts is both crisp and moulded to a high standard. The lower hull on the other hand, is moulded to a fair standard and only has a minimum amount of detail on it. The HobbyBoss kit, for all intent and purposes, looks to be a scaled down version of their 1:16 scale kit and comes with a very complete interior. The mould quality is patchy with some parts moulded very well but others having injector pin marks. The parts count on this kit is quite high and for the price, the kit is very difficult not to like. I firmly believe this kit is just a little too ambitious in its execution.

The parts breakdown requires the model to be extremely precise and sadly, this is not the case. The model requires a lot of time and dry fitting to make it fit together well, while the Tamiya kit (while simpler) requires much less skill to put together, and as a result, makes for a cleaner and more precise build.

The road wheels on both kits are done very well but the Tamiya kit has the edge. The all important rubber road wheel section is much wider and more accurate on the Tamiya kit but the bolt detail on the rim is much better on the HobbyBoss kit. The idler wheels on the HobbyBoss kit are much finer also and exhibit a lot more finesse in their execution. The tracks in both kits are very well detailed but, both suffer from shallow injector pin marks on the inside face.

The HobbyBoss kit is clearly better on the lower hull, with all the detail you could possibly want

and with the added bonus of being able to position the road wheels in any position on the vertical axis. The Tamiya lower hull is devoid of detail and pales in comparison.

The Tamiya turret has a quite fine cast texture on it and on first glance, is very well done. On closer inspection, however, the turret is pinched at the front end. I first became aware of this while reading a tread on Track48 (<http://www.track48.com/shop/forum.htm>) where John O'Reilly pointed out that Tamiya had quietly updated and corrected the turret from its first release. The old incorrect turret sprue is coded "Sprue C 32515 A905708PS" while the new corrected sprue is coded "Sprue C 32515 A905708-01PS". You all know what sprue I had - that's right, the old incorrect one! The HobbyBoss turret has an almost not existent turret texture, but was more accurate than the initial

Tamiya release overall. There are only two things that really stand out and they are the roof ventilator (which has the vent holes impressed into the turret roof) and the side armoured visor covers, which are too shallow.

In summary, then, this is a choice between ease of assembly (Tamiya) with a few faults; or harder assembly but with less faults (HobbyBoss). Maybe, I thought, it would be a good idea to combine the two. I will tell you up front though, I would not do what I have done in this article again. Given the chance and knowing what I know now with the benefit of hindsight, I would combine the lower hull of the HobbyBoss kit with the upper hull of the Tamiya kit. I would also correct the HobbyBoss turret and not the Tamiya one. I would however use all of the aftermarket items I have used as they offer a great deal more finesse than either of the kit parts.



Two thirds of the thickness of the turret top plate has been sanded away to reproduce the scale thickness around the hatch opening. In this view the author is dry fitting the plate to the rest of the turret. Note the Verlinden turret ring and breech have also been dry fitted in this view.



The Tamiya turret top plate has the rain guard missing. A 10 thou plastic plate slightly larger than the opening of the top of the Tamiya item was first glued in place. When dry, the opening was cut away to produce the rain guard.



The Tamiya road wheels have been used in this build but needed to be modified to accept the HobbyBoss swing arms. In this comparison photo, the author shows the plastic sleeve inserted into the Tamiya road wheel and the reduction of the road wheel stem to sit flush with the outside ring of the road wheel.

The author was unhappy with the HobbyBoss springs so he decided to make some himself; He did this by wrapping thin solder around a central core of wire in a pin vice to produce the spring.



In this photo the spring has been attached to the HobbyBoss swing arm to complete the assembly.



The Tamiya upper hull has the engine vents as an integral part of the moulding. In order for the Aber part to sit flush against the hull, the Tamiya items were drilled out and then cut away with the aid of a jeweller's fret saw.



10 thou plastic strips have been used here to increase the width of the mantlet cover. The sides have also been textured.

KITBASH COMMENCES - THE LOWER HULL

The build began with the lower hull. I had the Tamiya hull, which was quickly discarded due to the lack of detail. The HobbyBoss hull on the other hand was far better but my example had been partially built; and not very well to be honest. I did have the Verlinden interior set (2249) that included the complete lower hull. On close inspection, most of the interior parts in this set seemed better than the HobbyBoss items, or so I thought at the time. In hindsight however, it would have been better to go out and use one of the other unbuilt hulls that I had obtained from my

work colleague. I pressed on and mated the rear lower hull plate to the Verlinden item. This required a fair bit of filler and girding away of the Verlinden part to make it fit. The bottom of the hull was a pour casting and as a result required flattening out with the aid of sandpaper on a flat surface.

At this point, I noticed I had sanded away some of road wheel arm assemblies that are cast as part of the hull. Okay, I thought, I'll just use the HobbyBoss items that were more detailed. This was easier said than done. I sanded off the outside detail on the Verlinden part and also drilled out the areas were

the springs would fit. I then drilled out the openings for the road wheel swing arms and attached all the hardware associated with the HobbyBoss kit onto the Verlinden casting. When this was complete, I thought to myself you "stupid old bugger"! Not only had I created a lot of work for myself, the resulting assembly would hardly be seen so why did I do it? I smugly said to myself, the interior was better (or at least easier to assemble) than the HobbyBoss kit. Wrong again sunshine! You just can't see the interior when the model is completed. The next step was to make some springs as I also

foolishly believed you may be able to see these. I made these by coiling a soft solder around a central piece of wire in a pin vise to produce a spring, this was then attached to a plastic tube of appropriate diameter. These were then dry fitted to the HobbyBoss swing arms.

The rear hull plate has been designed to accommodate the Tamiya fuel cells and has a result if you leave them off a quite unsightly gap results when you mate the upper and lower decks together. The simple solution was to fabricate a replacement from 20 thou plastic card and add the bolt detail later. ►



The HobbyBoss swing arms are being dry fitted to the Verlinden hull in this view.



The Aber engine vents are being test fitted to the hull in this view. Note one side of the top engine vent has been removed while the other is awaiting the cutting process. The hull grip handle attachment points have been filled and the kit mudguard removed.



In this photo, we can compare the Tamiya front idler wheel in green to the HobbyBoss item in grey. The HobbyBoss item was used for this build as the detail was finer.



In this comparison photo, the Tamiya road wheel in green is compared to the HobbyBoss road wheel in grey. Note the smaller overall dimensions of the HobbyBoss road wheel and the incorrect hub shape.



A breech shell bag was fabricated from Milliput.



The bag is fitted here to the combined HobbyBoss and Verlinden Gun breech parts.



The Tamiya upper hull in green has been fitted to the lower Verlinden hull in sand. Note how the engine vent covers have now been blanked off with plastic card and how well the Aber rear engine/vent screen cover fits.

“Tamiya’s newer turret is a much more accurate, but I had the older moulding and as such I thought it might be interesting to correct this part...”



In this photo the author shows the corrections to the Tamiya turret. Note the Milliput additions to the turret front and rain gutter on the hatch opening.



This overall photo gives a glimpse of the correction work carried out on the turret. The Aber barrel is now also installed.



In this photo, the author shows the completed turret. Of note, are the weld marks on the upper and lower portions of the turret as well as the inclusion of cast numbers on the turret sides. Various bolt heads have also been replaced on the gun breech and pistol port openings.



The interior of the turret is shown to good effect in this photo. Note the combination of scratch built, Verlinden and HobbyBoss items. The gun breech has been omitted from this shot as it was painted separately.

◀ RUNNING GEAR

The road wheels were tackled next. The HobbyBoss items have a number of flaws with the main one being the road wheel rubber width. The Tamiya items are much better in that regard but require a plastic sleeve to make the fit to the HobbyBoss swing arms. In order to achieve this, I inserted a plastic tube into the opening and glued in place. When this had dried I sanded the inside mounting tube flush with the outside ring of the road wheel.

The tracks followed. Both the Tamiya and HobbyBoss kits have link and length tracks and for the most part are fine as they are. However, I wanted two of the road wheels missing from the right hand side of the vehicle to add a bit of interest and to roughly follow a vehicle I had a photo of in this configuration. I also wanted the left hand side of the track assembly to give the impression of "spring sag" by having the track follow the profile of the road wheels on the top rung. The only real alternative was to use a set of aftermarket tracks by World War II Productions (Item No. W-4803). This set is wonderfully detailed and a quantum leap over both the Tamiya and HobbyBoss items. Not only is the detail far superior, but they are easy to clean up and assemble. The swing arms were then press fitted to the hull and arranged in such a way as to suggest "spring sag". I then press fitted the road wheels to the swing arms and proceeded to glue a run of the World War II tracks to form a run that was the distance from the first to the last road wheels. When dry, I glued the track to the bottom half of the road wheels. The next step was to attach the front and rear idlers to the lower hull, you will note, I have used the HobbyBoss front idlers as the detail was finer. The rest of the track was then draped over the top half of the road wheels and tacked in place as necessary. The whole assembly was then allowed to dry and removed from the hull as a full assembly. This assembly included the tracks, road wheels and idlers, but not the swing arms. The track assembly was then super glued as a complete unit to give it strength.

UPPER HULL

I now moved my attention to the upper hull. I first shaved off the mudguards and filled all the grab handles recess points on the hull as I had the Aber updates and was keen to use them.

The top engine vent grills are moulded solid as part of the upper hull. These had to be removed to install the Aber engine screens. I did this by firstly drilling three

holes in the vents themselves and cutting them out with a jeweller's fret saw. The openings were then filed to accept the Aber items. The Aber sets are for the most part wonderful items and the fit and finesse of the parts is quite literally breathtaking. The rear engine cover for example is a one-piece affair that, once bent, simply sits on the rear deck without any gaps at all. The all-important mesh grid size is perfect is far more accurate than either the Tamiya or the really inaccurate HobbyBoss item. If you only buy one update set for the T-34, make it this one. It is simply the best.

ARE WE DONE YET? THE TURRET ASSEMBLY

The main reason I used the Tamiya kit over the HobbyBoss example was my naïve belief that the Tamiya turret was more accurate. In hindsight, this proved to be incorrect and to be honest it would have been easier to correct the HobbyBoss turret rather than the Tamiya one.

Tamiya's newer turret is much more accurate, but I had the older moulding and as such I thought it might be interesting to correct this part. I firstly worked on the turret roof assembly. As I wanted to show as much of the interior as possible, it was my intent to have the large turret hatch open. When viewed from any angle above the vertical plan the hatch moulding is far too thick and as a result has to be thinned. I achieved this by sanding down almost three quarters of the thickness of the plate by filing on the inside surface. I then added a 10 thou plate to the opening on the outside surface to replicate the rain gutter. When this had dried I opened up the plate to leave a very thin protruding edge. I then assembled the turret with the addition of the Verlinden interior. The main gun was put together with the Verlinden breech and the HobbyBoss breech guards attached. I wanted a shell bag to be fitted to the underside of the breech guard so I fabricated one from Milliput and attached it. The top plate and turret sides were then glued together and at this point I noticed the "pinched in" forward section of the turret.

At this stage of the build I thought to myself, what the heck am I doing! After much soul searching and a big girly cry, I decided to beef up the front end of the turret to match the drawings and photos I had on hand. The process was far easier than I had imagined and worked well.

I then added the various welds marks from Milliput on the side of the turret. Tamiya Surface Primer was applied with a small brush for ▶



The author has used a combination of etch sets on this model. The vent screens and mudguards come from the Aber range while the fuel tank from the Hauler range. Note how the rear plate has been scratch built to overcome the ill-fitting Tamiya part.



On the front of the vehicle the author has shown the same attention to detail as the rear. The headlight has been hollowed out with the Hauler front mudguards being modified to suit the reference source.



Here is the initial pose of the tank commander. When posting these pictures on Missing-Lynx, it was noted the back of the tank commander was too straight. Note also the cutout in the hatch plate.



In this view the front of the vehicle can be seen in its unpainted form. Note the hull machine gun has been replaced with fine tube and the additions to the front of the hull.

“With the amount of detail in evidence, it is hard to believe the model is 1:48 scale...”



A good overall shot of the unpainted tank.

◀ the upper top plate weld marks. Casting numbers were added to the turret sides with the whole assembly being coated in a Tamiya Surface Primer mix, using an old broad brush in a stippling motion to achieve the rough cast textured effect that I wanted to reproduce.

FINISHING TOUCHES AND FIGURE ASSEMBLY

The rear fuel tank was bent from the Hauler T-34 Fuel Drums HLX48036 1:48 scale photo-etched set. This is one of the most pain free photo-etched sets that I have ever used.

The logs are from garden cuttings with Tamiya surface primer coated on.

The various grab handles were

reproduced with thin brass wire and the fine chain to secure the logs to the hull came from Tank Workshop.

The figure is a combination of the lower portion of the kneeling figure in the Tamiya WWII US Navy Pilot set (Item 61107) and the upper portion from the Evolution 1:48 scale figure set (EM 48005). The head came again from the Tamiya Pilot set with the headgear from the Evolution set. I posted some pictures of this build on Missing-Lynx and a gentleman by the name of Phillip Young contacted me to say that the figure looked a little stiff. I took a closer look at the figure and agreed with him. On my first pass the figure's back was far too straight. I reworked the figure to a more relaxed pose.

PAINTING AND MARKINGS

The main inspiration for this tank came from a small photo in Concord book, "Soviet Tanks in Combat 1941-1945". The caption stated it was photographed in Vyborg in late June 1944. Two road wheels were missing and it had ditching logs and foliage attached. It looked different and I liked the large "236" digits painted on the hull and turret sides.

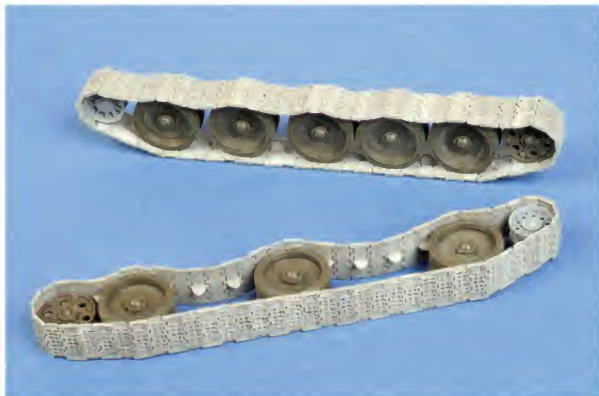
The model was sprayed with Gunze Sangyo acrylic H303 Green FS34102. The paint was thinned with 70% thinner. I generally spray with a higher pressure than most (in my case 35 PSI) for the first pass, as I tend to do a few light coats rather than one thick coat.

When this stage was complete,

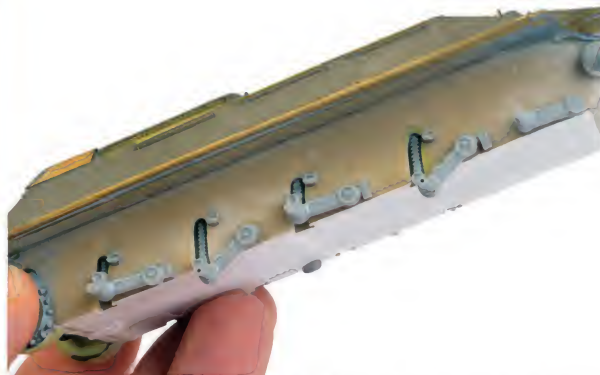
I mixed a wash of Tamiya Black Acrylic XF-1 Flat Black and XF-64 Red Brown together in equal proportions, with 85% thinner and the compressor set at 20 PSI. I carefully sprayed all the recesses of the tank, ensuring the spray is angled toward the outside of the recess and toward the dead centre of the tank. This is what you might call "post shading" technique.

For the road wheels and general detail painting, I generally use Humbrol Enamels as I have found them to be more opaque than acrylics so you only have to paint it once.

I then applied a very thin wash of Winsor & Newton Burnt Umber mixed with Zippo lighter fluid into all the recesses. I use lighter fluid ▶



World War II Production tracks have been used in this build as they offer a greater degree of finesse than either the Tamiya or HobbyBoss items.



The HobbyBoss swing arms are fitted to the Verlinden hull in this photo. The arms have been fitted to give the impression of spring sag as outlined in the text.



A combination of colours and textures really bring this model to life. The unditching logs were picked from the authors garden.



The addition of foliage and tarps really set the rear of the vehicle off.



The mud build up on the rear of the vehicle and the exhaust staining add to the inherent realism of this model.



The author has used Scale Link 1:160 etch scale foliage on this view, the results speak for themselves



In this photo the hardly-seen interior is shown to good effect. Note the rain gutter and the micro chipping in and around the hatch opening.



The more casual pose of the Tank Commander may be seen here. Note how the back of the figure has more of a curve compared to the straight back in the construction photos.

◀ as a mixing agent with oils as it dries dead flat and is very easy to work with.

With the camouflage and wash applied, I built up several thin (15% paint; 85% thinner) layers of Tamiya XF-52 Earth Brown, more on the bogie and track assemblies than on the tank. When this has all dried I applied a micro-chipping effect on all surfaces. I like this method as it shows the scratches up close but when viewed from a distance it is almost unnoticeable. This "scale effect" is more natural in my view than some of the overdone effects I have seen in recent years. I could write reams on this but it is hardly necessary. Each has their own view. I have also applied this effect to the sides of the tank also to simulate the scraping of the foliage.

GREENING UP

The last step is the attachment of foliage. I have used a small portion of Scale-Link SLF-39 photo-etch foliage on this model. I must say this is the best-sized foliage I have used in 1:48 scale, even though it is labelled 1:160!

Firstly, the leaves were bent into a curled section on the fret with the aid of a plastic scribe. The fret was then prepared with a light coat of metal primer. The branches need to be thickened up - as branches are round not flat - by using a medium like Liquitex. This medium remains flexible and is a form of PVA glue. Paint this on the stems thickly and let dry over night. You may require 2-3 coats to achieve a roundish branch. If you look closely at any tree you will notice that not all the leaves are the same colour to that end spray the entire fret green and pick out some leaves on the fret with a yellow/green mix and others with a brown green mix. The next step is painting the stems a brown or brownish grey. When this is complete, use an oil wash on the branches.

The foliage can now be cut from the fret. When this is done, bend the leaves with your thumb and forefinger into a slightly rounded shape. The curl should go the length of the leaf. Next, bend the branches to the desired shape. Try and visualize what the foliage will look like before you apply it. It is most important to bend the branches to produce a 3D effect. This process can be very time consuming as each time you either bend or cut a leaf or branch, paint will come away from the fret and as a result you will have to touch up these areas where necessary.

The last step is to secure the foliage using PVA Glue and touch up the ends of the leaves where they have come away from the fret. At this stage your model is probably slightly semi-gloss. The

best Matt Varnish I have ever used is Vallejo 520 straight from the bottle. This produces a dead flat finish and blends every thing in.

SELF-CRITICISM

I am relatively pleased with this model. The Russian camouflage colour was a surprise. I like the hue of the Gunze paint. I have the personality type that tends to hate my models when complete. However, this model is a text book example of how to waste time, as many of the corrections and additions are either invisible or not really necessary. To base this build on the Tamiya kit was a mistake. I should have used the HobbyBoss kit as a starting point and then obtained the Tamiya road wheels elsewhere. It is my hope that any of you reading this article will take heed of my advice and make and take what you can from this article and improve the HobbyBoss kit rather than the Tamiya one. ■

Modelspec

Tamiya 1:48 scale T-34/76 Kit No. 32515
HobbyBoss 1:48 scale T-34/76 Kit No. 84806

Accessories Used

Verlinden Productions T-34 Interior. (2249)
Aber T-34 Vol 1 basic set. (48 008)
Aber T-34 Vol 2 Grill Cover Set basic set. (48 009)
Aber T-34 barrel. (AB 48L04)
Scale Link 1:160 Etch Foliage. (SNF011)
Hawler 1:48 photo-etched set T-34 Fuel Drums. (HLX48036)
Aber 1:35 scale Buckles and Straps. (A21)

Paints

- Gunze Sangyo "H303" Green
- Tamiya XF-62 Olive Drab; XF-52 Flat Earth; XF-1 Flat Black; XF-64 Red Brown
- Vallejo Khaki 988; Khaki Grey 880; London Grey 836; White 842

Tools Used

- Waldron Sub-Miniature Punch and Die set
- Small Shop Brass Assist roller set MK MC
- Small Shop Hold and Fold

References

- Soviet Panzers in Action. Squadron/Signal Publications.
- Soviet Tanks in Combat 1941-1945. ISBN 962-361-815-5-6 Concord Publications.
- T-34 Medium Tank 1939-1943. ISBN 978-07103365-1 Ian Allan Publishing
- T-34 /76 Medium Tank 1941-1945. ISBN 1-85532-382-382-6 Osprey Publishing
- T-34/76 Camouflage & Markings. ISBN 978-83-89450-72-2 MMP Publications
- T-34 (Russian text). ISBN 5-94038-013-1 Grapso Publishing.
- T-34 The Mythical Weapon. ISBN 83-89717-50-6 Rossagrap Publishing.

- ✓ Good level of detail in various aspects of each kit. The strengths tended to compliment each other.

- ✗ Complex project.

Available from

Tamiya kits are distributed in the UK by The Hobby Company Limited www.hobbyco.co.uk
HobbyBoss kits are available in the UK from Creative Models Limited www.creativemodels.co.uk

Rating ●●●●●●○○

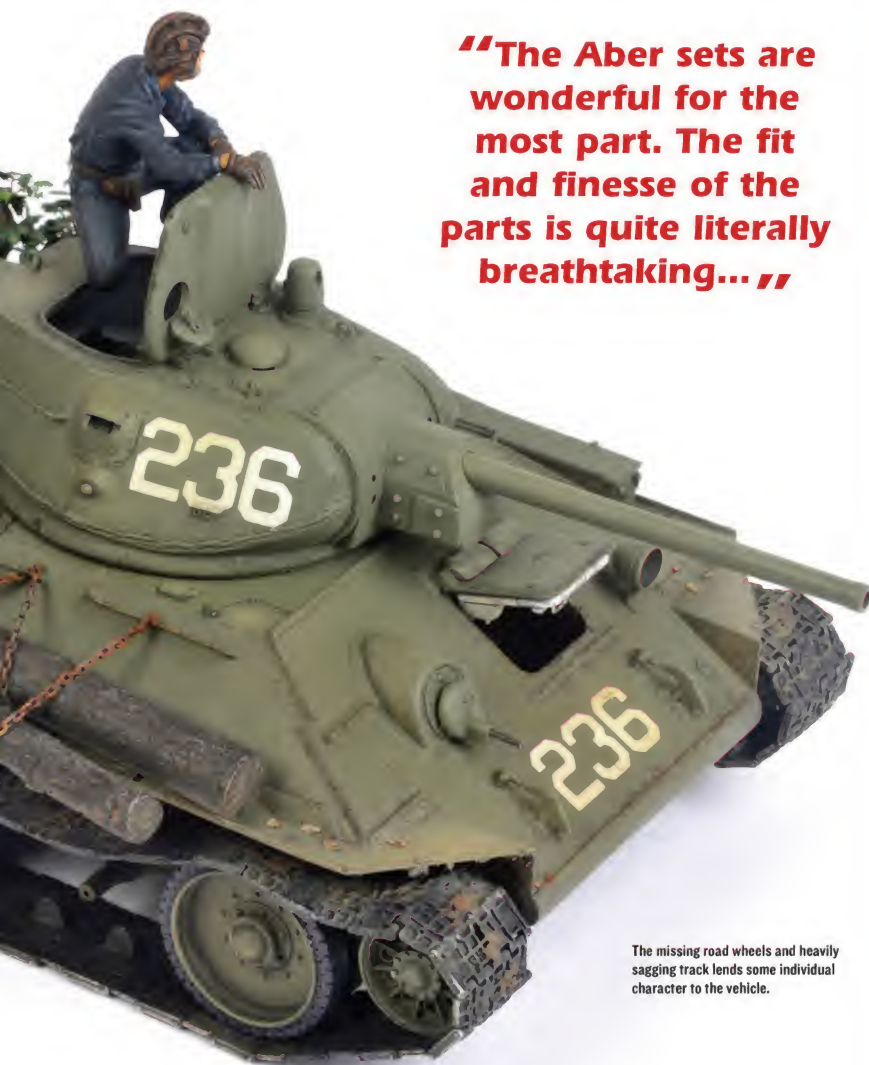
This was a challenging but satisfying project, but I would do a few things differently next time!

Scale effect in motion. The aim of the micro-chipping is to have the chipping in evidence close up but when the model is pulled away it almost disappears (like the real thing).

Acknowledgements

I was struck by the generosity displayed by a number of people on this project. The first of which is our Editor, who lent me more reference on the T-34 than I knew what to do with. The others are:

- John O'Reilly who probably doesn't know it but without his post on Track 48 I may not have corrected the Tamiya Turret
- Bill Wiseman, for his track help and advice
- And lastly, to Phillip Young, for pointing out a posture problem with the figure when I posted the construction images on Missing Lynx. (www.missing-lynx.com)



"The Aber sets are wonderful for the most part. The fit and finesse of the parts is quite literally breathtaking..."

The missing road wheels and heavily sagging track lends some individual character to the vehicle.



With the amount of detail in evidence, it is hard to believe the model is 1:48 scale.

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Ross Ferro takes a look at GreatWall Hobby's companion piece to its earlier Rheinmetall 12.8cm - the 1:35 scale Krupp 12.8cm Pak 44 and its separately available turned aluminium barrel and muzzle brake.

ROLLING OUT THE BIG GUNS

This kit is the follow on release from the earlier GreatWall Hobby 1:35 scale WWII German Rheinmetall 12.8cm K44 L/55. GreatWall Hobby has done another excellent job in capturing the look and feel of this remarkably big anti-tank gun.

The contents comprise six sprues of very nicely moulded plastic parts, brass tubing, a small fret of photo-etch, a colour printed painting guide and an eleven page instruction guide. The upgrade barrel set includes four beautifully machined aluminium pieces with an exploded view of how they fit together on the box top.

The first thing you will need to decide is whether to configure the gun in travel mode or firing mode. The instructions steps seem reasonably straightforward in this regard. However, like most things, it will pay off to carefully confirm at each step which parts are and which parts are not required and of course test fitting as you go. If you are able to locate any references then this may also provide some additional information if required.

The gun's cruciform platform and wheel base is made up from the majority of the "A" and "C"

sprues, which are crisply moulded and flash free with any ejector pin marks either hidden from view or non-existent. Take care when attaching the four round base plates C1 x 2 and C2 x 2 to the end of each of the four cruciform arms, as you will need to cut the top off each part as suggested for the firing mode configuration. It would have been helpful to have a faint line moulded into parts C1 and C2 to give an indication of exactly how much needs to be trimmed off. However using the old adage of measuring (and checking) twice and cutting once should help to achieve the desired result.

The completion of the cruciform sees the wheels being added onto axles, which are attached to the cruciform and once again take care when choosing the firing or travelling modes. Details on all of the parts are again very nicely moulded the wheels being particularly well done with some careful painting this part of the kit will look most impressive.

The gun and gun cradle comprise the remaining parts sprues "B, D and F". GreatWall have done a particularly outstanding job with the gun shield being very thinly moulded and looking very much in scale to my eye. The breech block and gun sight are also well moulded and the each display a well

thought out level of attention to detail and finish.

With some careful application of glue the gun can be made to elevate and rotate however if the safety of the finished kit is your concern then gluing the parts together may be a better option.

The kit supplied plastic barrel is moulded in two parts requiring the removal of the inevitable glue joint down the middle of the finished barrel. I have had only moderate success in eliminating the join lines on these types of barrels in the past. However, fear not, this is where the upgrade barrel will come into its own. Purpose made for this kit, the aluminium barrel looks very convincing and is a great example of some very clever machining skills providing a level of detail and ease of finish that is certainly much more user friendly.

Completion of the kit sees all the sub-assemblies brought together. Looking at this you begin to realise just how big this kit is and pondering where exactly it is going to fit in your display space, and even more so how big it must have been in real life! The painting guide is pretty basic suggesting dark yellow or perhaps dark yellow. The more adventurous may wish to add a splash of colour.

In summary, this is a very well thought out and professionally produced kit. The availability of a purpose-made upgrade barrel will turn this into something quite special. I highly recommend this kit to artillery modellers and to anyone who is looking for something a little bit out of the ordinary. ■

GreatWall Hobby kits and accessories are available from The Airbrush Company www.airbrushes.com



Parts are supplied to build the model in firing or travel mode.



The plastic shield is especially noteworthy for its thin moulding. It is actually translucent in places.



The gun's cruciform platform.



The sprues are beautifully presented and perfectly moulded.



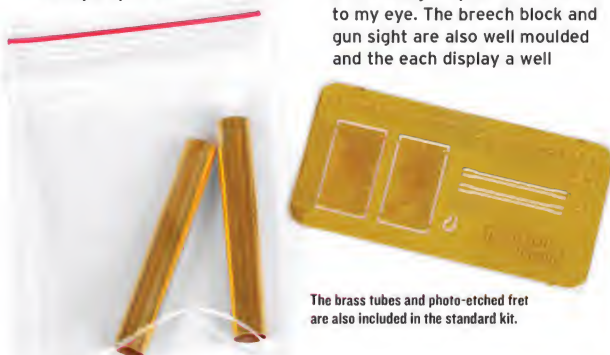
The plastic gun barrel as supplied is not bad...



...but the optional turned aluminium upgrade is just stunning.



The complex perforated muzzle brake is particularly nice.



The brass tubes and photo-etched fret are also included in the standard kit.

BEST BRASS AROUND

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APRIL - MAY - JUNE RELEASES

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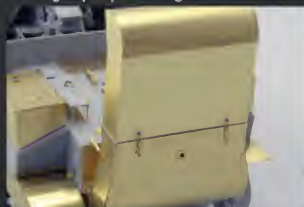
36142 M-7 Mid production interior
1/35 Dragon



36156 M-7 Mid production ammo boxes
1/35 Dragon



36157 M-7 Mid production deep water
fording eq. 1/35 Dragon



36146 BMP-3 MICV early
1/35 Trumpeter



36155 M-7 Mid production fenders
1/35 Dragon



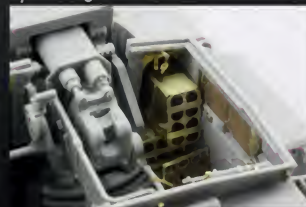
36158 M-7 Mid production exterior
1/35 Dragon



36140 StuG.III Ausf.F/8
1/35 Dragon 6644



36140 StuG.III Ausf.F/8
1/35 Dragon 6644



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- Ferrari FXX with a custom paint-job
- Greatwall Hobby's 1:35 Krupp 12.8cm PaK44
- Building and painting Tamiya's 1:48 M8 armoured car
- Wayne Hui updates Monogram's F-101 Voodoo
- How to create a waterline model from a full-hull kit using Heller's Graf Spee

and much more...



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MAD MAX IN AFGHANISTAN



José Brito wrestles with MMK's 1:35 scale multimedia Tatra 815 SOT for a spectacular result.



Afghanistan is one of the most dangerous places on earth today. The war against terror is still very active and there seems to be no end at the horizon.

In one corner we have the Taliban and in the other, the Coalition. Both sides are determined and the battle is getting tougher every day.

The Taliban has huge experience in guerrilla warfare. They know the terrain, the people and they are very hard to find and fight. They act like ghosts and avoid direct confrontation with the Coalition forces at all cost. Most of the time, the Coalition forces therefore have to flush out the Taliban and force them to fight. This is not easy. It demands long travel, constant surveillance and the combination of high-tech material with more common resources like trucks, pick-ups or light armoured vehicles.

The Czech Republic is part of the Coalition. They are widely using the Tatra 815 truck with lots of additions like guns and extra armour. This is a vehicle planned to survive in a dangerous environment and at the same time be deadly. The Tatra is like a rolling fortress and it seems to convey a message: we will shoot first and ask questions later. Don't mess with us!

THE MMK TATRA 815 SOT IN 1:35 SCALE

At this moment, the only company that produces the Tatra 815 SOT in 1:35 scale is MMK from the Czech Republic.

All the major parts are in resin and we are also presented with a photo-etched fret and decals. The resin parts are not numbered and are inside small bags so the building is a very time consuming process. We must first take a close look at the instructions (that sometimes are not very clear) and then find the part in the bags. To make things even more difficult,

the Tatra 815 SOT is not a widely documented vehicle, at least at the time I am writing this article.

The fit of parts is not very good so test-fitting and readjustments are essential all throughout the build.

But there are very positive points too. The photo-etched parts are top quality. Likewise, the decals are absolutely great.

This kit demands some experience and patience. It can be turned into a great replica, but be prepared for to have the kit fight back!

CONSTRUCTION

Before I start building the model I usually draw a few sketches to determine the final position of the main elements on the diorama base. This helps me to refine the initial idea and place everything in the right spot.

Several small details were added in order to refine the model. These were mainly made from fine lead foil, wire and masking tape. Sadly, the Tatra 815 SOT is not a widely documented vehicle so it is hard to make a better detailing job.

The fit of the parts is far from good and adjustments were regularly required during the assembly. This kit from MMK demands some experience and lots of test fitting is necessary at this time. The instructions do not help much, because they are not very clear at some points.

During assembly, tools from Small Shop Tools were widely used to achieve the best results with the photo-etched parts provided in the kit. The MMK metal parts are just great and very well detailed. They greatly improve the final look of the model.

Deluxe Materials Rocket Hot glue was widely used in this kit. This glue bonds very fast and is ultra thin. These qualities are ideal for it to work in a capillarity fashion. ▶



A drawing before the project commences is a good way to work out where all the elements of the diorama will go.

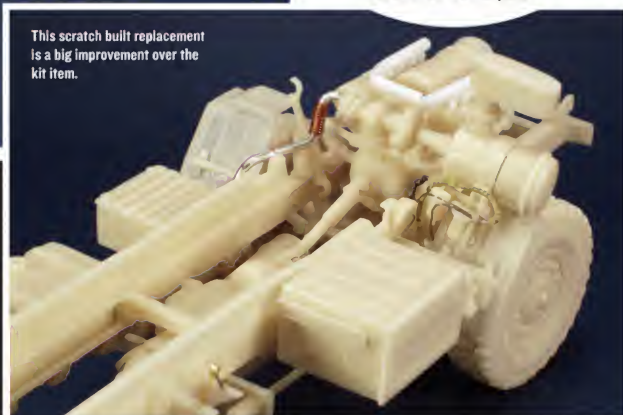
Detail on the MMK Tatra is mostly acceptable, but fit is poor and the instructions less than helpful.



Metal, wire and masking tape were used to replace some of the resin kit parts.

“The fit of the resin parts is not very good so test-fitting and readjustments are essential all throughout the build...”

This scratch built replacement is a big improvement over the kit item.



◀ The resin ladders provided in the kit are badly cast so I decided to replace them with new ones made from plastic profiles. Deluxe Materials Plastic Magic, which is an ultra-thin plastic glue, was used to bond these parts. We can achieve strong and very clean results when this adhesive is applied with their Pin Flow. The Plastic Magic gently melts the plastic and turns the bond permanent and very resistant. For the best results we must let dry the parts for about 24 hours. The bond is then virtually indestructible.

Several other details were combined with the photo-etched parts provided. These included fine lead wire from Plus Model, wood and masking tape. These small details will noticeably improve the model's final look. They will also add an extra touch of realism.

This is a truly multi-media kit. Several add-ons including the cabin

metal shields were made in plastic and aluminium foil and according to the few Tatra 815 SOT pictures available.

PAINTING

As we are using several different materials including plastic, wood, photo-etched parts and lead wire, the model must be primed before painting. As usual, my models are primed in Vallejo acrylic primers. In this case I used the Vallejo Grey Primer. Vallejo primers dry very fast and turn the surface very smooth, ideal for airbrushing. They must be airbrushed in several layers in order to keep the surface detail. The same treatment was given for the several other parts that will be used in this project.

Once the primer was thoroughly dry, the model was airbrushed in Vallejo Model Air 71028 Sand Yellow. As usual, this was airbrushed in several layers in

order to maintain the surface detail.

Colour variation started by airbrushing a mix of Vallejo Model Air 71028 Sand Yellow and Vallejo Model Air 71074 Radome Tan. Once again, this was applied in several layers.

Some parts were also airbrushed in Vallejo Model Air 71017 Russian Green.

The wheels were earlier airbrushed in Vallejo Model Air 71028 and, once completely dry, the tyre sections were brushed in Vallejo Model Color 950 Black. Once the black was properly dry, a small piece of Blu-Tack was placed in the centre to protect the previously painted parts and then the entire wheel was airbrushed in Vallejo Model Air 71057 Black. The final step is removing the Blu-Tack. This is a very fast and clean way to paint tyres.

WEATHERING AND FINISHING

The first step of the weathering was applying thousands of scratches. These were applied with a small sponge using several colours in order to achieve a more realistic appearance.

The scratches were finalised with a brand new fine brush. This is a very time consuming process and some care is needed. During this stage we can easily ruin the model, so some care and patience is needed. The scratches must look natural and in the logical spots.

With the scratches dry and with most of the details painted, it's time to apply the decals. First step, cutting the decals. For that I always use a brand new blade and a steel ruler. Watch your fingers!

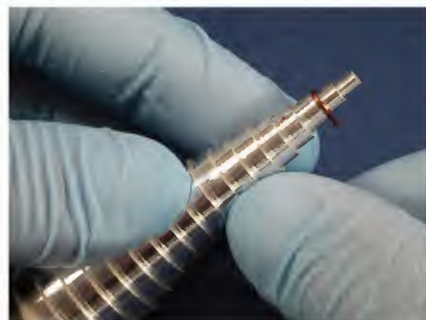
I applied a small amount of Vallejo Model Air Gloss Varnish where the decals were destined to be placed. This turns the surface even more smooth and ideal to ▶



Tools from The Small Shop, including this Hold and Fold, helped get the most out of the excellent photo-etched parts.

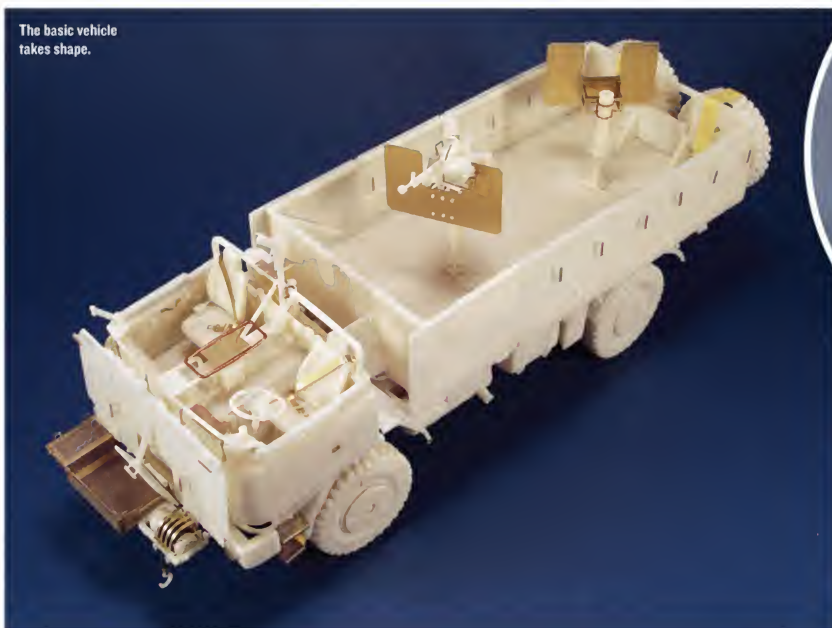


This is The Wire Wrangler from The Small Shop – very handy for bending all those tricky shapes from wire.



In this case, copper wire is first bent to the desired shape.

The basic vehicle takes shape.

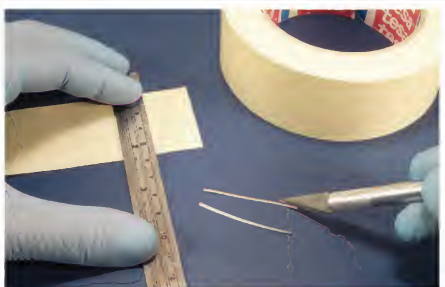


The winch is a delicate combination of photo-etch, resin and wire cable.



Rocket Hot is a super-thin super glue that works by capillary action, being drawn into the tiny gaps between the parts to form a strong bond.

“The photo-etched parts are top quality. Likewise, the decals are absolutely great...”



Camouflage net was painstakingly cut from a roll of masking tape.



Each narrow strip was carefully joined using the thick super glue, Rocket Max.



The kit ladders were poorly cast, so replacements were made using plastic strip.



PSP and stowage were assembled from bits of scrap and wire.



The plastic ladder was tricky to assemble but is a definite improvement over the kit part.



The tough and purposeful lines of this unique machine are obvious from this angle.



The big spare tyres and gun shields are very distinctive.



Vallejo's acrylic grey primer was used to prepare the model for camouflage.

◀ receive the decal. This was allowed to dry for a few minutes. The next step was to apply a small amount of Vallejo Decal Fix in the spot where the decal will be. This product improves the decal setting. Dip the decal into water for a few seconds, and then place it in the spot and remove the excess of water. Usually I use a cotton bud or a small piece of tissue paper for this job.

I applied a small portion of Vallejo Decal Medium over the decal. This product will soften the decal and improve the setting. In fact this product looks like it almost destroys the decal. The decal will wrinkle terribly, but no worries, once the Vallejo Decal Medium has dried out, the decal will look great as if it has been painted directly onto the surface.

To finish the job I applied a small portion of Vallejo Model Air Matt

Varnish over the decal. The varnish protects and seals the decal.

Several Vallejo pigment colours were used in order to achieve the dusty look. In this case they were applied using the "dry method". The "dry method" means that they are applied directly from the jar and then they will be fixed in place.

The pigments were fixed in place with Winsor & Newton Artist's White Spirit. All we have to do is apply, by brush, several drops over the pigments and allow to dry without touching. During this process the model will turn very dark and it will seem that the pigments disappear, but once the White Spirit evaporates the pigments will reappear in their full glory.

A drum was airbrushed in Vallejo Model Air 71004. Some Tamiya Masking Tape was then applied. A stripe was airbrushed using Vallejo Model Air 7101 White. Once

everything was dry, the masking tape was removed and the drum was ready for further weathering and finishing. Small details like this will bring the project to life. Identical treatment was given to some fuel drums and decals from Rally model cars were used to detail them. These colourful items will certainly add a more visual interest to the scene.

The guns received several details and were brush painted in acrylics from the Vallejo Model Color range. Once dry, they were washed with Vallejo Transparent Acrylic Wash Sepia Shade 73200 and 73201 Black Shade.

Several details were picked with the help of a soft metal pencil from the Derwent range. The pencil must be a soft one and all we have to do is pass the pencil over the gun. The job can be finished with the help of a finger.

BASE AND DIORAMA

I like to build bases with bulk. In my opinion, bases with terrain look more interesting.

As usual for my projects, the base is a wood piece and the sidewalls are in balsa wood.

The interior is filled with heat isolation foam used in civil construction. This material is cheap, easy to find and easy to work. It is also lightweight and ideal to fill big areas.

I started applying several different sizes of rocks over the heat isolation foam. They were applied in the desired spots and then glued into place with the help of a syringe and white glue mixed with water. White glue takes some time to dry, but once set it is very resistant and most importantly, it is practically transparent.

The products used to make the terrain were fine sand, ▶



A PLAMYA Automatic Grenade Launcher from Tank was used to supplement the basic model.



Tank also provided the M249 US Machine Guns.



The devil is in the detail. This bucket has a copper wire handle.



The truck's DsHK 12.7mm heavy machine gun has received some extra detail from photo-etched parts and wire too.



Vallejo Model Air acrylic 71028 Sand Yellow was the base coat.



The wheels were sprayed sand and then the inside section of the tyres were brush painted with thinned black paint.



When the black paint had dried, a ball of Blu-Tack was squeezed over the wheel hub, acting as a mask for the tyre.



The smaller detail parts were primed separate from the main body.



Stowage and some of the other detail parts were painted Vallejo Model Air 71017 Russian Green for variety.



The rest of the tyres were now painted flat black.



A mix of Vallejo Model Air 71028 Sand Yellow and Vallejo Model Air 71074 Radome Tan was applied in several layers for variation of the basic shade.



A small sponge loaded with several colours was used to get the paint chipping underways.



Chipping was continued with a brand new fine brush.

◀ Aquaplast from Robbialac (which is a pre-made filler used in civil construction), brown and black acrylic paint, water and Talens Acrylic Gel Medium Glossy. The paste looks like chocolate mousse and was applied over the foam with a medium brush. Usually I use a cheap brush for this task. At the end it can be cleaned with water.

For better results we must let the base dry for about 24 hours. Once dry, the terrain is rock hard and with a great texture achieved by the fine sand.

The terrain was dry brushed with several Winsor & Newton

oil colors. The dry brush must be applied gently with a medium flat brush. The colours used were 29 Naples Yellow Hue, 35 Raw Umber and 40 Titanium White. As usual a medium flat brush was used in this task. If necessary, Winsor & Newton Artist's white Spirit can be mixed to make the oils flow better.

I usually use white glue mixed with water to fix the vegetation in the desired spots. The bond is very strong and transparent.

The vegetation was placed over the white glue. Vegetation from Model Scene and MiniNatur was used and we must use different

types of vegetation in order to achieve a more realistic look.

The barbed wire entanglements from R.M.G. Resin Models from Portugal were glued in the desired spots. They will keep the barbed wire (from the same company) in place. I opened several holes with the help of a needle and then glued the metal entanglements into the holes.

Pigments from Vallejo range were applied in the dry method over the base. ▶



Decals were cut out with a very sharp new hobby blade. Watch out for your fingers!



The surfaces to receive decals were first prepared with a brushed application of Vallejo Gloss Varnish.



Decal Medium is brushed over the decal after it has been applied. Don't panic if the decal wrinkles or otherwise deforms. It will bounce back better than ever when the Decal Medium has dried.



A coat of Vallejo Matt Varnish blends the glossy decal back into the flat paintwork.



The weapons are painted separately. Mounting small parts on toothpicks make them easier to handle, especially when painting and weathering.



Vallejo pigments are added to the stark black tyres and to the lower body.

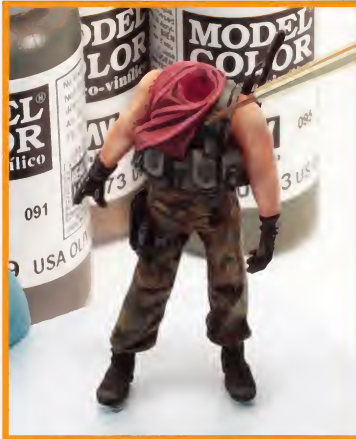
The vehicle itself is complete.
The red ties add some colour,
especially from this rear view.



The truck is a jumble of weapons
and stowage, inside and out.



MIG Productions' 1:35 scale U.S. Special Forces
figure looks fantastic, even in its bare resin.



Vallejo Model Color was used exclusively on the body.

The completed figure.



Winsor & Newton oil paints were employed for
the flesh tones on the replacement Hornet head.



A subtle application of pigments tones down the camouflage colours.

Several colours must be used and once applied they will be fixed in place with small drops of Winsor & Newton Artist' White Spirit. The idea to apply drops, not pass the brush over the pigments. The drops will act by capillary action and, once thoroughly dry, the pigments will appear in full colour.

FIGURES

The figure is from MIG Productions and it is lovely - full of attitude and featuring flawless casting.

I decided to replace the head with a Hornet item, as it was more detailed and better scale.

The figure was primed in Vallejo Acrylic-Urethane White Primer as usual applied in several layers in order to keep the surface detail.

The figure was entirely painted in Vallejo Model Color, except for the flesh areas that were painted in Winsor & Newton oils. The dusty look was achieved by applying Vallejo pigments directly from the jar. They were applied with the help of a small flat brush.

CONCLUSION

I really enjoyed this project. The MMK Tatra 815 SOT is a very demanding kit and definitely best suited to the experienced modeller. The fit is not good and the instructions not very clear in some places.

Even so, MMK provides some of the best decals I have ever used, and a great photo-etched fret. In any case, if you want to make a Tatra 815 SOT you must buy

the MMK kit because, if I'm not wrong, it is the only company that produces this truck in 1:35 scale!

In the end I am happy with the result. Once finished, the Tatra looks impressive and the MIG Productions figure really is awesome. ■

Modelspec

1:35 MMK, Tatra 815 SOT

Item 35035

Items used

- 1:35 MIG Productions, U.S. Special Forces (Afghanistan, Iraq), Item MP35-313
- 1:35 RMG Resin Models, WW1 and WW2 Steel Pickets for barbed wire entanglements, Item RM040
- 1:35 RMG Resin Models, Barbed Wire (two points type), Item RM013
- 1:35 Royal Model, German Damaged Oil Drums (WW2), Item 618

Materials and paints used

Hood glue, Deluxe Materials glue solutions, Heat isolation foam, Wood base, Injected plastic, Resin parts, Plastic card, Metal parts, Vallejo acrylics, Vallejo washes, Vallejo pigments, Vallejo Grey Primer, Oil colours, Graphite soft pencil, Aguaplast - Robbialac, Fine sand, Plus Model Lead Wire

References use

Several Internet sites and forums

- ✓ The Tatra from MMK is a very original subject. The MIG figure is just wonderful.
- ✗ Poor fit in places. Unclear instructions. The Tatra is not an easy kit - not for the beginner.

Available from

MMK kits are available from specialty hobby outlets.

Rating ●●●●●○○○

As usual for my projects, the base is a wood piece and the sidewalls are in balsa wood.



The products used to make the terrain were fine sand, Aguaplast, brown and black acrylic paint, water and Talens Acrylic Gel Medium Glossy.

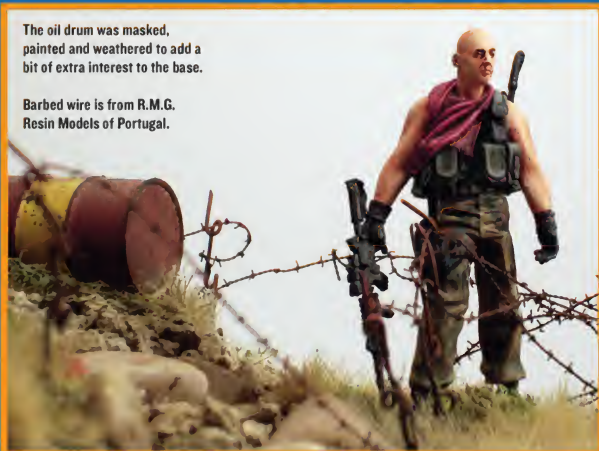


Details were picked with the help of a soft metal pencil from the Derwent range.



The oil drum was masked, painted and weathered to add a bit of extra interest to the base.

Barbed wire is from R.M.G. Resin Models of Portugal.



“The Tatra is like a rolling fortress and it seems to convey a message: we will shoot first and ask questions later. Don’t mess with us..! ,,”

The MMK Tatra 815 SOT is a very demanding kit and definitely best suited to the experienced modeller, but it looks great when the effort is put in.



BIG, BAD AND UGLY

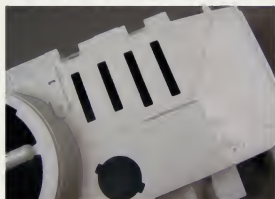
Graham Tetley takes a first look in the box at CyberHobby's all-new 1:35 scale Neubaufahrzeug.



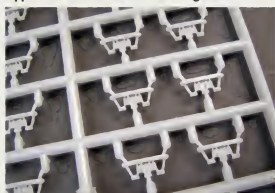
The upper hull close-up – weld details abound!



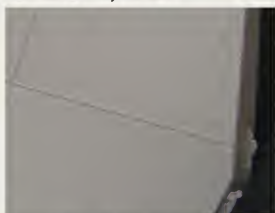
The headlight folds into the circular mount.



Upper hull and mounts for the engine louvers.



Track links are very well done.



Countersunk screw head detail on the turret.



Drive sprockets.



The photo-etched fret.

It's big, its bad, and its ugly. And we don't mean the reviewer! Never did I ever dream that we would see this kit in plastic, yet here I am holding one in my sweaty hands. Several resin companies have produced one (Coree, Cromwell and Armo) but this is the first in plastic. And rather nice it is too.

The great thing about the Neubaufahrzeug is that it is unique in the German tank arsenal. No other vehicle sported the combination of multiple turrets, dual armament, and the distinctive rhomboid running gear shape which itself was a throwback to the trench-crossing vehicle of the First World War. I guess that that is why I like it so much.

Anyway, Dragon has come to the rescue in the form of their CyberHobby brand and the release of this first version, the mild steel vehicle. I say 'first' because, as this is a totally newly tooled kit, there are unused parts greyed out on the turret and hull sprues. As such, I guess that we will see the other version, possibly as a regular Dragon kit, in the not too distant future.

We have here just under 600 parts which are crisply moulded in Dragon's standard light grey plastic. They are flash free with no visible pin marks anywhere. The instructions are nice and clear as there are no '3-in-1' options here, but there are still a few minor errors. There is a small photo-etched fret included but a lot of what is there is also included in plastic. The tracks are not Magic but come on sprues and depict the 36cm, solid guide horn version as seen on this vehicle. Marking options are basic and limited to a set of balkenkreuz, with painting options given for two vehicles. There is one scheme for the Norway option, and another for a 3-tone, pre-war, vehicle.

As I write this I have built most of the kit and it goes together really well. The tracks are especially well done and worthy of praise. It is not a cheap kit and it is not easy to obtain, but it is the only game in town at the moment. I got mine from the owner of my local model shop (Halifax Modellers World) who brings them in from Dragon USA for his customers.

If you can find one it has to come recommended, but the price may deter some from buying it.

Dragon kits are distributed in the UK by The Hobby Company Limited www.hobbyco.net

NEU KII THE BL



The CyberHobby department of Dragon Models has released the first ever 1:35 scale injection moulded kit of the German Neubaufahrzeug medium tank of WWII. The kit represents the second vehicle of five produced, which had a body made from mild steel rather than the hardened steel of the last three examples.

This vehicle is a good example of early tank design features. The Neubaufahrzeug has a track run passing around the entire lower

hull, driven from rear mounted sprockets, and it incorporates multi-turret armament in the upper hull. Produced in 1934, the Nr. 2 vehicle was equipped with one 7.5cm KwK L/24 and a 3.7cm KwK L/45 guns in the main turret, and two 7.92mm MG13 guns each in the smaller auxiliary turrets.

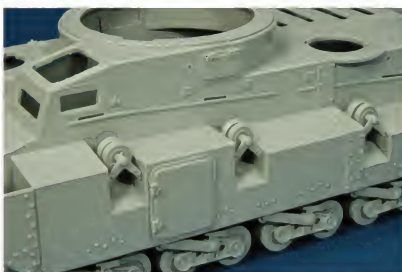
In 1940, the three armoured vehicles Nr.3, 4 & 5 were sent to Norway with Panzer Abteilung zbV40. Following the conflict there, the remaining two vehicles were sent back to Germany to join the Nr.2 vehicle for use in training. ▶

D ON LOCK

Gary Edmundson gets his hands on a pre-release CyberHobby 1:35 scale Neubaufahrzeug Nr.2 kit, and wastes no time in getting it built.



To ensure proper alignment of the running gear, the first and last bogie stations were glued in place first



Return roller positions were different for each side, with the ones on the left mounted lower than those on the right.



Trimming the running gear parts for this kit involved a fair bit of work, with the assemblies consisting of about 60 individual wheels.



The track runs each consisted of 125 links that had their joints soaked in Tamiya's Extra Thin styrene cement and were then formed onto the running gear after a couple of minutes to start setting up.



The track runs were each made in three sections so that they could be removed for painting.

◀ DRAGON'S KIT DESIGN

Around June 2010, the designs for a Neubaufahrzeug model began to take shape on Dragon's drawing boards. Over the course of a year, drawings were refined and details were checked using a number of old, outdated reference drawings and as many photo images that could be found of these rare vehicles. Helpful advice came also from the Internet, as modelling enthusiasts shared their comments on things they'd spotted while studying various

references. By May 2011, most of the parts had been produced, examined, modified and finalised which allowed the kit of the Nr.2 vehicle to be released. Both Tom Cockle and myself have built the kit, completed unfortunately after the model had been released. Anything discovered after the fact was discussed and Tom was able to post most of his "errata" findings on the Missing-Lynx Forums at www.missing-lynx.com

The Nr.2 vehicle differed from the last three production types in

a number of ways. The main turret had a single round domed lid as opposed to the split hatches of the later vehicles. The turret also featured screwed plates, as could be seen by carefully scrutinizing reference photos. The MG turrets were different in shape and details, mounting MG13 weapons as opposed to the MG34's of the later tanks. The exhaust and muffler systems had a mount that was more elevated at the front, and also was missing the auxiliary pipe that was used on the Nr. 3,4,5 vehicles.

LOWER HULL AND RUNNING GEAR

Since the track runs are individual injection moulded links, they have to be formed over a completed set of running gear. To paint the wheels and add them after construction is not an option with this model. The running gear is entirely enclosed by the structure of the supports. There are a lot of wheels to trim from the sprue and, because of this, completing the lower hull is a chore. There is a flange within the drive sprocket halves that does not align with



The kit was built from test parts sent from Dragon in Hong Kong just prior to the release of the kit in April 2011. Aber's tool clamps were used in place of the kit parts moulded-on offerings. Photo-etched options for some of the kit parts including the rear air vent louvers were supplied, but the styrene parts were adequate. For a complex and ungainly looking model, the kit was quite a simple one to assemble.

the sprocket holes. Assuming symmetry would have been the case, the locating tab for the flange was removed and it was turned slightly to a more aligned position.

The track links were sliced from the sprue with a sharp #11 X-Acto blade that resulted in minimal cleanup. The runs on each side required 125 links, which allowed some sag to be placed between the return rollers. Three breaks per side were allowed to allow the runs to be removed from the model to be painted separately. The links were grouped into rows of ten to keep count of the number, and then a flat run was made for the length between the front and rear road wheels using 39 links. After allowing this to dry entirely, a glued row of 69 links was positioned from the first teeth of the drive sprocket, over the return rollers, and around the idler to the front of the first road wheel. A run of 17 links was then glued together and positioned onto the drive sprocket and down to the back of the last road wheel. The front mud guard of the fender assembly was left off until after the tracks were painted and installed permanently on the running gear.

UPPER HULL

The small MG turrets were assembled with the visors closed, although optional parts are provided to allow them to be open. A hole was drilled near the MG aperture for a gunsight, and styrene sheet rectangles were added to the front of the turrets to match what appear to be rain guards over the front visors. The machine guns provided with the kit were MG 34s, but these tanks were actually armed with MG 13 weapons that have a different looking barrel. Since most photos show these vehicles with nothing mounted, so MG barrels were not installed on my model.

The main turret construction was straightforward with a very clean fit, but the gun and mantlet assembly needed some filling and sanding behind the gun barrels. The front holder for the antenna rest seemed a bit thin compared to references.

Tools had their moulded clamps stripped, and Aber photo-etched parts were substituted. The OVM tool placement varied with this vehicle over time, and so there were some assumptions made as to what went where at what time.



Small rain shields were added to the front of the MG turret's front visors using sheet styrene.

PAINTING

The model was painted as it would have appeared in 1940, with the standard dunkelgrau/dunkelbraun scheme. Originally this vehicle sported the three-colour Buntfarbenanstrich scheme of green/yellow/brown for Panzers in the 1935-1937 period.

After initially airbrushing with Tamiya acrylic XF-63 German Grey, XF-64 Red Brown was mixed with a touch of XF-1 Flat Black and diluted to achieve a relatively thin demarcation line. A

wavy pattern of the dunkelbraun mix was then added to the model using some photo reference, but mostly artistic licence. The model had all of its details painted at this time, including the rubber part of the road wheels, idlers and return rollers which were all carefully painted in situ with a lightened Vallejo flat black. Tool handles were given a light brown wood colour, with the metal part in black. The handles were then given a diluted oil paint wash of raw umber, and the metal parts of



A wooden handle was screwed into the bottom of the model to help with the painting and weathering stages.



After applying the camouflage scheme, the rubber tyres were painted with an off-black Vallejo acrylic. The vehicle's tools were also painted with Vallejo acrylics.



The track runs were painted and then attached to the model with the help of copper soldering clips.



After the decals had been applied and Vallejo Matte Medium airbrushed on, the whole model received a light overspray of very diluted Tamiya acrylics. XF-57 Buff and XF-20 Medium grey were mixed to make the dusty colour.



A wash of raw umber and black oil paint, thinned with mineral spirits, was added to the whole model. Small sections were completed until the whole model had been covered.

The tool handles were treated to a wash of raw umber oil paint which created a wood grain appearance, and toned down the harsh look of the bare acrylic paint.

◀ the tools drybrushed with silver enamel toned down with the raw umber oil paint.

Decals were applied to the surface of the hull and turret by first spraying a gloss surface onto the area. Once the markings had dried, a coat of Vallejo Matte Medium was airbrushed over it to regain a flat homogeneous finish. The track runs were painted with Floquil's Grimy Black and then painted with a mixture of earth-coloured pastel powders and Tamiya's acrylic thinner. They were heavily dry brushed with silver enamel toned down with raw umber oil paint to indicate worn metal. The tracks were then placed onto the running gear, and the front fenders (previously painted) were cemented into position along with their associated brackets and other attachments.

The model was subsequently given a light airbrushing of diluted Tamiya XF-57 Buff and XF-20 Medium Grey mix concentrating on the lower, rear areas. This was repeated until the kit started to take on the appearance of a well-used and dusty vehicle.

To enhance the detail, a wash of thinned oil paint was applied to the surfaces. Lamp Black and Raw Umber Winsor & Newton series 1 oil paint was thinned with mineral spirit, and applied sparingly to the detail by first dampening the surface with a small amount of spirit, applying the thinned paint, and then wiping any excess paint off in a downward motion. This not only makes the detail stand out, but also suggests weathering effects from rain and spilled or leaking fluid from field service. Small sections of the model were worked on at one time until the whole vehicle had been covered. This is certainly very tedious work,

but the difference before and after is quite dramatic.

PASTEL WEATHERING

Although many types of weathering powders are available, I have found that chalk pastels work well for my purposes. After grinding down the powder by rubbing the chalk pastels onto rough sandpaper, I collect the resulting dust into aluminum dishes and I am able to mix colours and solvents etc. in these individual "palettes".

Dirt coloured pastel powder (used earlier to colour the track runs) was lightly brushed onto areas in and around the running gear, and also the rear of the vehicle. Small amounts were also used over the entire surface of the model, with the main turret seeing the least. It is important to cover the whole model with some of the pastel, since it is highly noticeable when parts of the surface have been missed. It just looks odd. The dust was also added to the metal parts of the vehicle tools, imparting a used look.

The muffler and exhaust system were also weathered with pastel dust. Oranges and browns worked best here, along with some paint scratches and polished metal highlighting.

After ensuring the dirt/dust weathering was appropriately balanced, a few paint chips were added to the areas around the hatches and other serviceable parts of the tank. Dark Grey Vallejo acrylic with a touch of dark brown was applied with a sharply pointed 000 brush. Oil and other stains were applied using Lifecolour Acrylic Oil, which is a semi-gloss paint that mimics the spilled fluid on the surface of the vehicle.

Overlooking the entire model, polished metal highlighting was added to grab handles, gun mantlet and barrels, and also the edges of hatches and access doors.

CONCLUSION

Dragon has produced a relatively simple kit to build, considering that this is a very complex looking vehicle. Although painting it presented some unusual challenges, the overall appeal of this model makes it well worth the time spent. This is definitely a subject that draws attention at any model show, and I look forward to the release of further versions of the Neubaufahrzeug. ■



Paint chips were added to the model using a dark grey and brown mix of Vallejo acrylics, applied using a 000 brush. The model was dry brushed with light mixes of Vallejo acrylic grey paint to enhance the detail. The folding headlamp was weathered by adding a wash of raw umber, and wiping the excess from the middle of the clear cover.



Modelspec

CyberHobby 1:35 scale Neubaufahrzeug Nr.2.
Kit No.6666

Paints and finishing products:

Tamiya acrylic paints - XF-1 Flat Black, XF-20 Medium Grey, XF-57 Buff, XF-63 German Grey, XF-64 Red Brown.

Vallejo acrylic paint - Dark Grey.
Winsor & Newton oil paints - Lamp Black, Raw Umber
Lifecolour Acrylic Oil
Various chalk pastels

✓ First time this subject has been available as an injection-moulded kit; relatively simple to build; high level of detail.

✗ Some challenges when painting due to running gear and track assembly.

Available from

Dragon kits are distributed in the UK by
The Hobby Company Limited www.hobbyco.net

Rating ●●●●●●●●○



Oil stains were added to the hull using Life Color Acrylic "Tensocrom" TSC 207 Oil. The rear of the vehicle received the most weathering treatment of both airbrush and pastel powders. The subtle streaked effect is from wiping dark oil paints with a brush dampened with mineral spirits. Brown and orange coloured chalk pastels were used to detail the muffler and exhaust system.

“Dragon has produced a relatively simple kit to build, considering that this is a very complex looking vehicle...”



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KIWI SCOUT

PART TWO – PAINTING AND WEATHERING

The Editor finishes the new 1:35 scale HobbyBoss M3A1 White Scout Car in Light Mud and Blue Black camouflage from the Italian front.



“HobbyBoss has delivered an M3A1 White Scout Car worthy of the 21st century...”

In the last issue of Model Military International, we finished the basic assembly of the HobbyBoss 1:35 scale M3A1 White Scout Car. To recap, it is a very good kit and construction moved along quickly. The model was built per instructions except that the unditching roller was left off the front and the old Zvezda / Revell tarpaulin was lengthened slightly and adapted to fit the newer HobbyBoss kit.

My model was destined to wear

the colours of the New Zealand 2nd Division in Italy - Light Mud and Blue Black.

MUDDYING THE WATERS

SCC5 Light Mud is a bit of an elusive shade, sometimes described as a dirty sandy grey.

Respected researcher Mike Starmer has come up with a formula for this colour in Humbrol enamels - 6 parts Humbrol 187 + 1 part Humbrol 31 + 1 part Humbrol 34. Mike also advises that White

Ensign Models enamel paint WEM ARB17 is a close match straight from the tin and can be used as-is.

These colours look good, but I prefer to use acrylic paints. I therefore decided to come up with a mix by trial and error. I started with Tamiya acrylic XF-49 Khaki, adding XF-54 Dark Sea Grey until I was happy with the match.

The ratio I settled on was about two-thirds XF-49 Khaki to one-third XF-54 Dark Sea Grey. I mixed up a batch of around 10ml - the same

as one of Tamiya's mini paint jars - and stored it in a small resealable glass container to make sure I could match the shade for later touch-ups.

As Murphy's Law would inevitably have it, however, I later found a document where Mike Starmer provides Tamiya mixes for various British and Commonwealth colours including Light Mud. Mike's suggestion is 4 parts XF-55 Deck



The elusive shade of Light Mud was mixed with around two-thirds Tamiya XF-49 Khaki and one-third XF-54 Dark Sea Grey.

Tan + 2 parts XF-49 Khaki + 1 part XF-66 Light Grey. If I had found this mix earlier, I would have used it, but I was fairly satisfied with my slightly darker version.

I sprayed the model in my version of Light Mud. I did not bother with a primer coat for the vehicle proper, as there was no multimedia content to worry about.

When the base coat dried, I mixed a little XF-57 Buff into the Light Mud mix to come up with a lighter shade. I used this as a

diffusion colour, providing some variation with randomly applied mottles and streaks. The trick here is to be subtle. You want to relieve the monotony of a single colour; not draw the eye to a patchwork of different shades. If you do go too far with the effect, however, you can always spray another mottle of the base colour over the lighter shade. I often do this myself.

BLACK AND BLUE

Light Mud was apparently never

used as a camouflage colour on its own. It was most commonly seen with a disruptive coat of Blue-Black or Dark Olive Green.

Mike Starmar's enamel suggestions for SCC14 Blue-Black are Humbol 33 + 67 in a ratio of 4:1, or straight Revell No. 9 Anthracite Grey. White Ensign Models' ARB16 is also a very close match straight from the tin.

In this case, my acrylic choice was Tamiya XF-69 NATO Black. Although this is actually a slightly

greenish colour, it looks good combined with the Light Mud, and Mike Starmar's Tamiya mixes suggest using this colour too.

In order to replicate the snaking, hard-edged camouflage pattern, I first applied the outline in thinned Tamiya XF-69 NATO Black with a fine paintbrush. In a couple of reference photos I saw that the camouflage pattern also continues seamlessly over what would be the inside surface of the open armoured flaps on the driver's and ▶

Sub-assemblies including wheels and seats were tacked to small boxes and painted separately.

The Light Mud mix was sprayed on the body of the vehicle using my Iwata HP-CP airbrush.

Tamiya XF-57 Buff was mixed into the Light Mud paint for a paler shade. This was heavily thinned and mottled onto the surface of the vehicle. The outline of the disruptive pattern was brush-painted on using Tamiya XF-69 NATO Black.

The inside of the dark camouflage areas were carefully coloured in with the airbrush, running very close to the brush-painted edges. This imparted a hint of overspray.

passenger's doors. I added these to the outlines too.

I then loaded up my Iwata HP-CH airbrush with NATO Black and very carefully coloured between the lines. I sprayed as close as I dared to the brush painted borders, allowing just the slightest suggestion of overspray to slightly soften the very hard edges.

Tamiya paints spray beautifully but they are very fragile once on the model. The paint will chip or rub off with minimal handling, so it is important to get a protective coating on quickly. Before this essential task, though, there was one more job to do.

A SHINING STAR

The Allied identification star decal provided in the HobbyBoss kit was too small and of peculiar proportions. In fact, almost all of

the decals for this Kiwi option were too small.

I replaced the star on the bonnet with a rub-down decal from Archer Fine Transfers. Unlike waterslide decals, I find that these rub-down transfers work best on a dead flat surface.

I was a bit concerned about how the decal would conform to the prominently raised hinges, but it was as good as gold. As usual, I rubbed the transfer down with a 2B pencil. I always make sure that the tip of the pencil is not too sharp before I start rubbing the backing sheet.

The tool handles were also dealt with before the gloss coat. The handles were painted in a base coat of Vallejo 311 New Wood, followed by a subtle graining with Winsor & Newton Burnt Sienna and finally a brushed overcoat of

Tamiya X-26 Clear Orange.

The entire vehicle then received several glossy coats of Future Floor Polish.

The gloss Future coat not only protects the fragile Tamiya paint but also provides the idea surface for decals. Bison Decals' "New Zealand Armour in Italy", Item No. 35060, offered accurate markings to replace the undersized and erroneous kit decals.

The kit's serial decal in particular gave me a chuckle, as it had sprouted an extra letter at the beginning of the number. In a reference photo of the vehicle, the bottom door hinge next to the serial number was casting a vertical shadow and this has apparently been misinterpreted as an "I" in front of the "F".

Although Bison decals have a flattish finish on the sheet,

they perform perfectly on the model. The carrier film disappears completely under a flat coat, resulting in an authentic painted-on look. The style of the fonts and the overall size are much more accurate too.

I had to cut the front and rear holders for the unit insignia from scrap plastic sheet, as these parts are not supplied by HobbyBoss. However, this was no great chore!

The glossy model was now treated to a coat of Sin Industries Filter - P402 Brown for Desert Yellow applied with a soft wide brush. A pin wash using thinned oil paint (a blend of Winsor & Newton Lamp Black and Raw Umber) was also dabbed around some of the key structural features including bolt heads, screws, hinges and so forth.

While HobbyBoss' external decals were not particularly good, ▶



The ever-reliable Archer Fine Transfers were used for the large identification star on the bonnet. It is important to get the placement precisely right before you start to rub down the dry decal, as it won't budge afterwards!



The dry transfer conformed beautifully to the hinges, bolts and panel lines on the M3A1's bonnet. A ghostly residue of the rubdown process may be seen near the white circle, but this was later wiped away with a damp fingertip.



Most of the other decals came from Bison Decals' "New Zealand Armour in Italy" decal sheet (item No. 35060), as the kit decals were too small, or inaccurate, or both. The holders for the unit insignia were cut from plastic card.



The tool handles were painted in a base coat of Vallejo 311 New Wood, followed by a subtle graining with Winsor & Newton Burnt Sienna and finally a brushed overcoat of Tamiya X-26 Clear Orange. The entire vehicle then received several glossy coats of Future Floor Polish.

The glossy model was now treated to a coat of Sin Industries Filter - P402 Brown for Desert Yellow. This was applied with a soft wide brush.



After several failed attempts at a flat coat, the glossy surface was eventually tamed with Testor's Model Master Flat Clear Lacquer

HANNANTS

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■ This particular kit is the very first attempt by ICM to release a Henschel 33 D1 plastic kit in 1/35 scale into the market

■ Highly detailed chassis, engine and interior

■ 4 versions decal sheet included

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Henschel 33 D1



Chipping was added to the edges of surfaces and in random spots. Tamiya XF-69 NATO Black was used on the Light Mud paint, while the Light Mud mix was used for chipping on the dark camouflage.



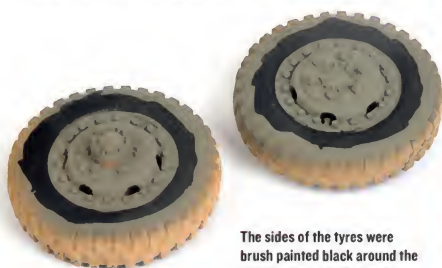
Note that the headlights, clear windscreen and some of the other smaller details have not yet been added.



The canvas tonneau was given a base coat, which was a mix of Tamiya XF-49 Khaki and XF-57 Buff. The first step of weathering was a light airbrushing of a heavily thinned dark shade in the natural shadow and drape areas of the cover.



The painted cover was treated to a generous oil wash. The blend was a 50/50 mix of Winsor & Newton Lamp Black and Raw Umber, thinned with Pure Gum Turpentine.



The sides of the tyres were brush painted black around the circumference of the rims.



Masks for the wheels were made using an Olfa Circle Cutter. This is a handy tool for masking and scratch building.



The wheels, painted and after a heavy oil wash to highlight bolt head and hub detail. It looks excessive now, but it will be toned down by the later application of pigments.



The dial and placard instruments supplied by HobbyBoss looked great on the dashboard.



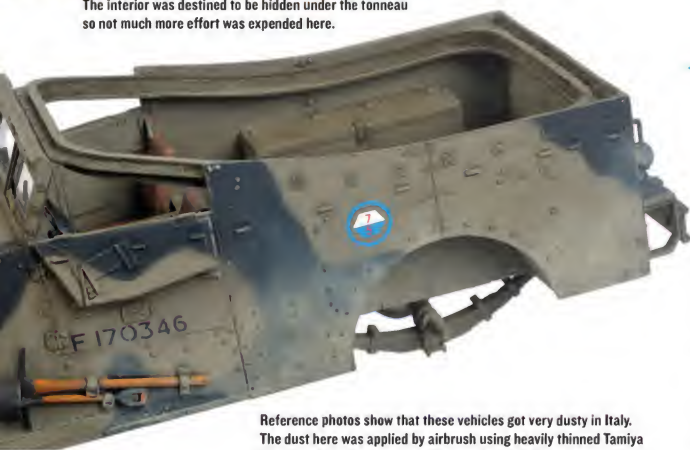
The eight seats with their base coat of Light Mud on the frames and Tamiya XF-64 Red Brown on the cushions.

The seats were weathered with the airbrush and an oil wash.





The interior was destined to be hidden under the tonneau so not much more effort was expended here.



Reference photos show that these vehicles got very dusty in Italy. The dust here was applied by airbrush using heavily thinned Tamiya XF-57 Buff. The Buff paint was later buffed with Micromesh cloths to expose screw and bolt head detail.



MiG Pigments, P030 Beach Sand and P234 Rubbel (sic) Dust, were blended then mixed with water before being brushed onto the tyres. Here, the slurry has dried. It will later be scrubbed off.

The same dusty slurry was brushed sparingly onto the tonneau.



The two resin ammunition cases were sourced from Ultracast.

the dial and placard decals for the instrument panel were terrific. They looked great, fitted perfectly and performed without any problems.

With all the decals and washes in place, it was time to flatten the finish. For some reason I haven't had much luck with my usual flat finishes lately. Gunze H20 Flat Clear seems to stay glossy, and I can't get hold of my favourite Polly Scale Flat locally. After several failed attempts with alternate products, the glossy surface was eventually tamed with Testor's Model Master Flat Clear Lacquer

TO TOP IT OFF...

Every photograph I could find of New Zealand 2nd Division White Scout Cars in Italy showed them with the canvas cover in place. This was therefore an essential element of my project. The modified Zvezda tonneau was first sprayed with Tamiya Grey Primer straight from the can. This helped identify if there were any flaws that needed correction before the main paint job.

The base coat for the canvas tonneau was a mix of Tamiya XF-49 Khaki and XF-57 Buff. The first step of weathering the tarp was a light airbrushing of a heavily thinned dark shade in the natural shadow and drape areas.

The painted cover was next treated to a generous oil wash. This was a 50/50 mix of Winsor & Newton Lamp Black and Raw Umber, thinned with Pure Gum Turpentine.

A RIGHT DUSTUP

Reference photos also showed these vehicles to be very dusty. The contrast between the camouflage colours often appeared quite low, due in part to the amount of dust obscuring the pattern.

Rather than rely on pigments, I wanted the bulk of the dust effect

to be completely permanent. I thought the best way to ensure this was to airbrush the dust onto the sides and rear of the vehicle.

The dust coat was applied by airbrush using heavily thinned Tamiya XF-57 Buff. The key to this effect was spraying multiple layers of very thin paint. At first the change of colour was barely noticeable, but the dust eventually revealed itself after a couple of coats. I focused on the back half of the vehicle, as I figured the front mudguards and running boards would have provided some measure of dust protection for the front.

The Buff paint was later buffed with Micromesh cloths to expose screw and bolt head detail.

MiG Pigments, P030 Beach Sand and P234 Rubbel (sic) Dust, were blended then mixed with water before being brushed onto the tyres. When this slurry had dried, I scrubbed most of the pigments off to leave a dusty residue in recessed areas.

At this stage the wheels and other smaller details were glued in place and I thought the model was finished.

I was taking final photographs of my model as the Royal Wedding of Prince William and Duchess Kate was playing out on television. Clearly ignoring his Regal duties, I noticed that Marcus Nicholls from Tamiya Model Magazine was online so I sent him a couple of photos of the finished model. He commented that he thought the tonneau looked a bit too clean compared to the rest of the vehicle, and that it might benefit from a spot of dusting.

I agreed.

The same slurry of MiG pigments was brushed sparingly onto the tonneau and, when dry, scrubbed off the top, leaving a light dusting on low lying areas. Marcus was right. It did look better! ▶

CONCLUSION

HobbyBoss has delivered an M3A1 White Scout Car worthy of the 21st century.

This model is well detailed, with particularly nice surface features including screw slots and bolt heads. It also fits together precisely despite all the separate panels. The few obvious goofs including the mysteriously missing radiator and the inaccurate decals may easily be addressed.

This M3A1 looks good straight from the box, but it will also serve as a solid basis for additional work in the fighting compartment and the engine bay.

Well done HobbyBoss. ■

Modelspec

HobbyBoss 1:35 scale M3A1 White Scout Car
Kit No. 82451

Accessories Used:

Tonneau adapted from Revell's reboxed Italeri M3A1 White Scout Car (03078)
Ultracast 1:35 scale WWII British Empire Steel Munition Boxes C.224 Mk 1 (135016)
Bison Decals "New Zealand Armour in Italy" (35060)
Archer Fine Transfers 1:35 scale "US Stars in Circles. (AR35048W)

Tools and Modelling Products:

Iwata HP-CH Airbrush, Aztek A470 Airbrush, Olfa Circle Cutter, Mission Models Multi-Tool, Tamiya Extra Thin Cement, Revell Contacta Cement, Gator's Grip acrylic glue, Kneadatite Blue/Yellow Epoxy, Putty Tape, Milliput White Two-Part Epoxy Putty, Evergreen sheet and strip styrene, Staple from a Tamiya bag!

Paints and Finishing Products:

Tamiya Acrylics: XF-1 Flat Black, XF-2 Flat White, XF-49 Khaki, XF-52 Flat Earth, XF-54 Dark Sea Grey, XF-55 Deck Tan, XF-57 Buff, XF-64 Red Brown, XF-69 NATO Black, XF-78 Wooden Deck Tan.
Tamiya Spray: Grey Primer
Vallejo Panzer Aces Acrylics: 310 Old Wood, 311 New Wood, 314 Canvas, 316 Dark Mud
Vallejo Model Colour Acrylics: 70877 Goldbrown
Gunze-Sangyo Acrylics: H20 Flat Clear
Model Master: Flat Clear Lacquer
Future Floor Polish
Tamiya Liquid Surface Primer
Winsor & Newton Oil Paints: 25 Lamp Black; 35 Raw Umber
Sin Industries Filter: P402 Brown for Desert Yellow
Mig Pigments: P030 Beach Sand; P234 Rubbel (sic) Dust

✓ Good fit, excellent surface detail, looks accurate, high level of detail with the option to display the engine via separate panels.

✗ Missing radiator, heavy headlight brushguard, no tonneau, some undersized and inaccurate decals.

Available from

HobbyBoss kits are available in the UK from Creative Models Limited www.creativemodels.co.uk
HobbyBoss kits are available in Australia from Creative Models Australia www.creativemodels.com.au

Rating ●●●●●●●●



The pigments were scrubbed off the top, leaving a light dusting on low lying areas.



The fit of the adapted Zvezda cover is very good. No glue was needed to keep the tonneau in place.



The tonneau gives the White Scout Car a different personality.

The ammo containers are painted a pale shade of Olive Drab to offer some contrast against the Light Mud of the vehicle.



HobbyBoss has delivered an excellent kit of the M3A1 White Scout Car.

The Bison serial numbers on the doors are a much better depiction than the HobbyBoss decals.

THE UNFORGETTABLE SHERMAN FROM THE FORGOTTEN WAR

Tasca has added a Korean War era "Easy Eight" Sherman to their growing M4 family. **Al Bowie** finds that Tasca has taken no short cuts.

Tasca's latest Sherman represents the final configuration of the M4A3 76mm HVSS that served post war and made up the initial mainstay of the US armoured forces during the Korean war where it served with distinction and quite a measure of success against North Korean T 34 85s. Like the real thing, the Tasca example includes all the late features such as the torsion bar hinges on the engine access grills and the late type exhaust deflector of this tank which is a first in this scale.

Once again, Tasca has produced a Sherman masterpiece by taking the time to identify the differences in the variants and not just repackaging their

earlier excellent M4A3 76mm HVSS with a different track as a Korean War variant. The kit is essentially the earlier release but with the addition of Sprue "Q", which has post war additions in the form of the modified mantlet and cover, the two part louvered exhaust grill, First Aid kit, tank telephone and the torsion bar engine access hatch hinges. The other new sprues in this kit are for the T80 double pin track, which was common (but not exclusive) to Korean War Shermans. Tasca offers the usual four pieces of vinyl track run however the modeller will have to attach the outer styrene face representing the cast metal block along with individual hollow guide teeth. These are superbly moulded with their locking nut and the access hole in the top. Assembly may be time consuming but will give an ultra realistic finish and prevent the usual problem of vinyl tracks curving around the idler and sprocket.

Construction commences with the track runs, which will take some time. The cast transmission housing is next with its multi-part tow shackle mounts. These are provided separately (four parts each). Nicely recess positions are provided so that the end result looks like they are welded to the hull like the real thing. The lower hull is Tasca's usual multi-piece affair however the design of this poses no problems and the construction is easy. Take care not to cement parts M12 (idler axle stubs) into M6 as these function like the real thing on an elliptical plane allowing for track tensioning. Following on is the HVSS suspension and these are not articulated like Tasca's previous VVSS suspension units. This is interesting as DML's latest HVSS units are. Each bogie unit is made up 19 parts including the road wheels. This section of production finishes with the

return rollers and mounts.

The correct hatch rests are provided along with the torsion bar hinges. Note that two bolts from part 07 need to be removed.

The suspension and tracks are fitted next. I recommend the use of the moveable elliptical idler to tension the track then secure this with glue. The sand shields are provided in plastic and are commendably thin. The rear hull fittings are similar to those in the earlier kit but reflect the post war fittings such as the tank telephone and the lack of spare track mounts either side of the folding stowage rack with the gun cleaning rods.

The turret comes next and the only real differences here are the mantlet and cover. The mantlet has the welded locating strips moulded on and the cover is made up of a lower, upper and two side panels, which will need a bit of filler to blend together.

The two Korean War marking options are fairly colourful by Sherman standards. The first is from C Company 89 TB 25 ID Han River 1951. It has a red and white shark's mouth and eyes and "Rices Red Devils" on the turret. The second is "Skeeter Hawk" of the 64 TB 3 ID Han River Feb 51 with a Tiger's head on a blue square with white diagonals.

This kit continues to maintain the high standards that Tasca have set themselves and is by far the best late M4A3 HVSS 76mm yet kitted in plastic. An excellent late production M4A3 76mm HVSS Sherman production can be built from this kit. By using aftermarket decals, a string of colourful Korean War Shermans can soon grace the modeller's shelves.

Highly Recommended. ■

Thanks to Tasca for the sample
www.tasca-modellismo.com



The one-piece upper hull has been seen in earlier Tasca releases.



The lower hull is Tasca's standard flat-pack affair, but it builds up quickly and precisely.



The late version M4A3 turret.



The mantlet and its moulded plastic cover are new for this release.



Moulding quality is excellent.



Sprue Q is brand new, with its two part louvered exhaust grill, First Aid kit, tank telephone and the torsion bar engine access hatch hinges.



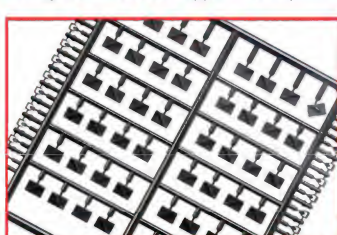
A modest photo-etched fret is included.



Striking markings are supplied for two vehicles.



Full length flexible tracks are only part of the story.



Separate track blocks and guide teeth need to be glued to the flexible tracks.



Small Scale A round-up of the latest news and releases in 1:72 and 1:76



ZVEZDA

GERMAN MACHINEGUN MG-34 PLUS CREW 1939-42

GERMAN INFANTRY 1939-42

SOVIET MACHINEGUN PLUS CREW 1939-43

SOVIET INFANTRY 1939-43

ALL 1:72 SCALE

Russian manufacturer Zvezda has been around now for quite some time but over the last two years or so their kits have begun to improve to the point where some are now considered world class.

These four figure sets appear to be aimed primarily at wargamers but the quality is so good that regular modellers will be able to use them too. There are next to no mould seams and where they do exist they may easily be scraped off with a blade.

The machine gun set has two figures with each figure having one leg and both arms separate. One of the gunner's arms is attached to the gun while in the German set the other crew member holds a pair of binoculars and the Soviet feeds the gun with ammunition.

The MG-34 in the German set is a neat two-piece affair on a tripod and in the Russian set it is a three piece Maxim with separate trolley and shield. Each features a small 2 inch by 1 inch base.

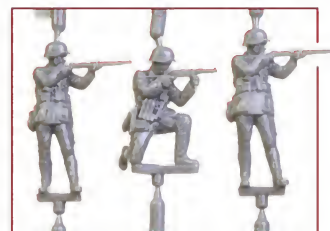
In the two Infantry sets, there are five one-piece figures but only three poses and each has a separate or common base. There are no instructions because there is no assembly required.

The plastic in these sets is rather like some of Italeri's figure sets. It is not as soft as Airfix or Matchbox figures but not as hard as Preiser or Dragon.

Whether you are into wargaming or not, these sets are worth a look and therefore a recommendation from me.

Recommended.

Zvezda is distributed in the UK by The Hobby Company Limited www.hobbyco.net
Glen Porter



ITALERI

1:72 SCALE M4A3 75 MM SHERMAN FAST ASSEMBLY KIT • KIT NO. 7518

Although not a wargamer myself, I should think that the ideal wargame AFV kit would have good scale accuracy, sufficient detail finesse to appear authentic, but at the same time be robust enough for frequent handling. Added to these characteristics is the need for simple assembly enabling a rapid production line approach to construction in order achieve timely concentration of force at the critical point of battle.... or am I getting too carried away? Let's just accept that wargamers probably want easy to build robust AFV's that still look like realistic scale models.

This is a twin packaging, and the two identical kits come in a typically European end-opening box with a photographic image of the assembled contents on a scenic base. Upon opening to examine the kit contents I removed an A-5 piece of paper that provided a painting and markings guide that similar to Italeri's full assembly small scale AFV kits. I turned it over expecting to find the assembly instructions, but instead discovered these on the reverse face of the box. Clip-together assembly of the 13 parts per tank looks to be simplicity itself, although some cement might be of benefit in the case of frequent handling and travel.

Well, so much for the printed media. Upon getting to grips with the plastic I was pleasantly surprised by the quality and crispness of detail immediately apparent on the light grey parts. Despite being simple clip-together affairs, these kits are very nicely moulded, and aside from the one-piece track assemblies, are similar in quality to many slightly older AFV kits in this scale. This is to say they are not Dragon-like masterpieces, but would generally not be too embarrassed stand muster with the old Esci 1/72 kits for example. As to the track and suspension assemblies, it is the track that is compromised with its smooth inner surface and edges, plus of course the drive sprockets are solid and toothed across the width of the track. The suspension units, though, are in fact very nicely done, and capture the look of the original.

Several decal choices are provided, covering the Philippines in 1944, the ETO 1944, the Ardennes in the winter of 1944/45 and finally Germany in 1945. These options are largely academic as presumably many wargamers will finish their vehicles according to the campaigns or units they like to fight their battles in miniature with.

My focus has been on these kits for wargames, and after all Italeri's box top specifically states that they are "Wargames Approved" (whatever this means). However they would be equally suitable for younger modellers due to their simplicity and speed of assembly, enabling the focus to be on painting and weathering. I can well remember as a youngster in the 1960s struggling to build a 1:76 scale Airfix Tiger I, where the cement drying times were inversely proportional to my patience. How much happier I would have been with a kit like the ones being reviewed here. Painting would be completed in under of an hour of opening and battle would have commenced without delay.

If my opening assumptions about what characteristics wargamers want in small scale AFV kits are correct, then this twin-kit boxing is right on the money. Very attractive and nicely detailed wargaming models can be quickly assembled and finished from these kits. They are also ideal as entry-level AFV kits for young modellers.

Recommended.

Thanks to Italeri for the review sample www.italeri.com

Mark Davies



July 10th

The Northern Model Show 2011
 Due to circumstances beyond our control we have had to move our Model show date for the Northern Model Show 2011, which was to be held on Sunday 22 May 2011.

It will now take place on Sunday 10th July 2011,

July 16th

AMPS CENTRAL SOUTH CAROLINA MODEL SHOW
 AMPS Central SC Chapter in conjunction with the Midlands Chapter of SCMA hosts our inaugural show. This is the first AMPS-type show in our area, so you won't want to miss it! Contest will be organized and run according to AMPS National Contest Rules. Special show theme is MIDEAST TURMOIL: PAST AND PRESENT.
 Location: Gymnasium, 432 Ball Park Road, Lexington (Columbia), SC 29072.

Times: 09:00am until 16:30pm.
 (Vendors allowed early entry for set-up.)

Entry Fees (first 3 models; additional models extra): Adults \$12; AMPS Members (with ID) \$10; Juniors (17 and under) \$5; General Admission FREE.

Vendor tables available for rent, or for more information, see our website www.ampscentralsouthcarolina.org
 For vendor sales or directions, contact us at info@ampscentralcarolina.org, or call Mike

Roof, Chapter Contact: (803) 318-1767 or Tim Darrah, Vendor Sales, (803) 481-7201.

July 23rd

TORBAY MILITARY MODELLING SOCIETY MODEL SHOW 2011

This is the club's 40th Anniversary with IPMS TORBAY & SOUTH DEVON Saturday 23RD July 2011 Torquay Town Hall, Castle Circus, Torquay TQ1 3RD. Special competition theme this year: Korean War 1950/53 Club & Trade Stands. Competition, Refreshments. 9.30am to 4 pm
www.torbay-ipms.org.uk
 Contact Paul Farrar paulfarrar@live.co.uk

July 23rd

The Basement present Figure World 2011.
 The show will be held on 23 July 2011 at the Great Hall, Oundle School, Oundle, Nr. Peterborough PE8 4GH.

In addition to traders and competition, there will be a Seminar held by Euro Militaire Best in Show winner, Chris Clayton.
 For more information please visit www.tbfigureworld.co.uk

September 3rd

Cornwall Model Show
 The annual Cornwall Model Show will be held from 10:00am to 6:30pm at St Johns Hall, Alverton Street, Penzance,

Cornwall. TR18 2QR
 Traders, Competitions, Clubs will be there.

Admission: Adult £1.50 Child £1
 Contact: Arthur Johnson
ipmswestcornwall@hotmail.co.uk

September 10th

The Edmonton International AFV Model Show, Open House & Military Vehicle Display.
 The show will be at HMCS Nonsuch, 117 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T5G-3E8, Canada.
 We will have Military Artists: Ron Volstad and Robert Bailey present.
 Registration 09:00 til 12:00, show goes to 6pm.
 Food supplied by a fundraising organisation.

Army Motors will be present to display historical Military Vehicles, with re enactors as well. Present day Military vehicles and open house.

Contact for more info:
 Anthony Sowards: teutonicnights@shaw.ca
 Jon Baniak: jonbaniak@shaw.ca
 Rod Dumouchel: krdumouc@telus.net
 Website: www.aafvms.ca
 EIAFVMS - Po Box 71071, Edmonton, Alberta, T5E-6J8

October 20th-23rd

The IPMS-Hellas Annual Expo - Competition will take place from 20 to 23 October 2011, at the "Apollon" conference center in Piraeus, Greece.
 The competition will be held in

the Main Hall and there shall be a separate hall for the trade stands. More information and details as we go on, will be published on our webpage: www.ipms-hellas.gr
 Any questions should be sent to this e-mail:
ipms-hellas@windowslive.com

October 21st-22nd

IPMS USA Region II Convention New Jersey IPMS once again is hosting the IPMS USA Region II Convention, we named JerseyCon II, at a new location - The Wyndham Hotel & Convention Center, Route 73, off Exit 4 on the New Jersey Turnpike, Mt Laurel, New Jersey. This new location offers better lighting, more vendor space and a better display area than the previous location. Show Theme: "1941 - America Enters the War". For more details contact Big Bill tomcatter53@optimum.net or the club's website www.njipms.org

October 29th

Gravesham Military Modelling Society Open Day
 The 2011 GMMS Open Day will be held on Saturday 29th October 2011 from 10 am until 4:00 pm. The show will include club displays, trade stands, open competition, refreshments and a raffle.
 The venue is: Chalk Parish Hall, Lower Higham Road, Chalk, Gravesend, Kent
 For more information, visit the GMMS website www.gmms.org.uk





Decals include a representation of the perforations in the muffler. That will be interesting...



SMALL BUT PERFECTLY FORMED

The Editor is pleased to see that Tamiya has downsized its excellent Panzer II Ausf.A/B/C kit to 1:48 scale.

The Panzer II was designed in 1934 as a temporary measure until the introduction of the more powerfully armed and better armoured Panzer III. By 1939, this light tank was largely outclassed by its contemporaries, but delays in delivery of the Panzer III and IV meant that it remained the mainstay of the Wehrmacht's armour spearhead during the Blitzkrieg campaigns in Poland, the Low Countries and France. It soldiered on through Russia and North Africa until 1943.

The Panzer II Ausf.A/B/C was used in the early campaigns of the Second World War.

Tamiya's released their 1:35 scale Panzer II Ausf.A/B/C in 2008. This was an all-new kit with absolutely no parts in common with the old Tamiya Panzer II Ausf.F.

This excellent kit has now been joined by a smaller version. Tamiya's 1:48 scale Panzer II Ausf.A/B/C comprises 155 parts

in dark grey coloured plastic; two metal rods as weights for the hull, two polythene caps and markings for three vehicles. This 1:48 scale offering represents the later version with the squared off front hull armour, as used in France and the Low Countries during 1940.

Moulding quality is superb. There are no ejector pin circles, sink marks or flash on any of the exterior surfaces. Even the lightly raised seam line around each road wheel is barely visible except under strong light.

Exterior detail is very good indeed. The grilles on the engine deck are moulded open. I was pleased to see that the sponsons are boxed in; while the trackguard mounts, shovel, jack, jack block, Notek light, smoke discharger and tow hooks are all separate parts. The only real concessions to scale compared to the 1:35 scale kit is that the suspension arms for the road wheels are moulded as part of each lower hull side, and most of the on-vehicle equipment is likewise moulded in place on the upper hull.

All hatches and visors are separate, and the Commander's hatch may be posed open.

A Commander figure rounds out the package. He is well moulded and nicely detailed.

The headlights are solid grey plastic. I'll be modifying mine to accept M.V. reflective lenses.

Also in common with its big brother, this 1:48 scale Panzer II includes injection moulded link and length tracks. The long top run features subtle and convincing drape between the return rollers, while the curved runs around the

drive sprockets and idler wheels are made up from multiples of two-link sections. If my previous experiences with Tamiya 1:48 scale kits are anything to go by - and I'll bet they are - I expect that these tracks will be trouble free to assemble and will look great when finished.

Unlike some of Tamiya's earlier 1:48 scale kits, the lower hull is all plastic. However, if you yearn for full 1:48 scale 8.9 ton weight, Tamiya does supply two metal rods to be fitted inside the lower hull. These are not structural though, so their use is purely optional.

Instructions are clearly called out in 16 illustrated steps.

Markings are supplied for three vehicles that participated in the French campaign of 1940, and it is a case of "any colour you want as long as it is Panzer Grey". Some relief is provided by yellow markings on two of the options. An interesting innovation is the use of a decal with uniform black dots to represent the perforations in the otherwise solid muffler heat guard. Two versions are supplied. It will be interesting to see how this looks on the finished model.

Tamiya's new 1:48 scale Panzer II Ausf.A/B/C will be ideal for the new modeller, or one who feels a little jaded after a massive super detailing project. This new kit will also be an ideal basis for more detailing if the modeller desires.

This won't stay unbuilt in its box for too long! ■

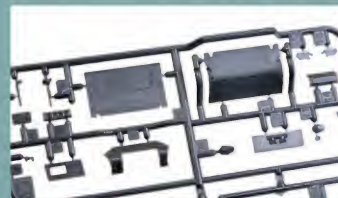
Thanks to Tamiya for the sample www.tamiya.com
Tamiya kits are distributed in the UK by The Hobby Company Limited
www.hobbyco.net



The grilles on the one-piece upper hull are moulded open.



The suspension arms are moulded to the hull sides.



These are the specific parts for this French Campaign version. Note the front armour plates.



The turret features a separate Commander's hatch and petite detail.



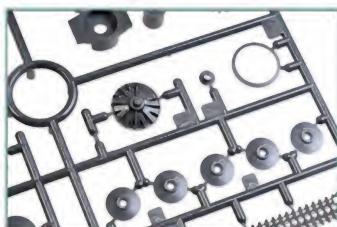
The Commander figure is quite respectable straight from the box.



Hull bullet splash guards are supplied as small separate parts.



The long upper track run is moulded with subtle drape between the return rollers.



The road wheels have detail on both sides. These are the back sections.



The fronts of the road wheels, as well as the return rollers.

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ITALERI

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Panzerwrecks 12 German Armour 44-45 £17.00

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Figures

- A round-up of the latest figure sets on release

TAMIYA

1:35 SCALE

AFRIKA KORPS INFANTRY SET

ITEM NO. 35314

Brand spanking new from the Big T is this set of five Afrika Korps figures. Very cleanly moulded in sand coloured styrene, all are in action poses and have nice detailing, particularly the uniforms. Also in the box is a sprue from an earlier Tamiya set that includes an assortment of personal kit. The only nitpick here is that the ammo boxes are hollow and will need filling underneath.

All figures feature open collared tunics and lace up canvas boots that were synonymous with the Afrika Korps uniform but this time no shorts - all are wearing trousers. Headwear is limited to steel helmets, which is only to be expected with action poses. No field caps or tropical pith helmets are included so you will have to source these elsewhere if required.

One thing that would have been nice to throw in the box are decals for the cuff bands as these are tricky to paint, however Tamiya does offer a set separately (item no; 12641 - see below). The box art is typical Tamiya, which over the years has always been an excellent reference point and this one is no exception, illustrating the differences in colour of the uniforms very well.

I'd go as far to suggest that you ignore the painting instructions on the back as your figures will be identical if you follow them to the letter. Around the box sides and opening end flaps are colour illustrations of personal equipment, weapons and insignia, again very useful reference.

This is the first set of Tamiya figures I have inspected in a long time and it is good to see they are catching up to the likes of Dragon in respect to moulded detail. The only thing I would have liked is new tooling for the personal equipment as this is a few years old but still it is quite usable.

Highly Recommended.

Thanks to The Hobby Company for the sample

www.hobbyco.com

Andy King



TAMIYA

1:35 SCALE WWII GERMAN

MILITARY INSIGNIA DECAL SET

(AFRIKA KORPS/WAFFEN SS)

ITEM NO. 12642

Now here's one for all figure modellers who love painting all those details into uniforms but just can't get patches and insignia right. Tamiya has come to the rescue with this great set of decals to deliver that finishing touch to any German uniform from the Afrika Korps or Waffen SS.

In the set you get one decal sheet loaded with plenty of insignias to do a lot of figures from shoulder and collar cuffs and tabs, forearm bands, helmet markings, belt buckles and other uniform markings. This is quite a detailed and complete set.

Also included is a small instruction sheet, identifying all markings and also diagrams of where all markings are to be placed on uniforms.

This will be a very handy set to have, and will last a long time considering how many details are packed onto the sheet. It will add to the level of detail painted on, though I would say to take care when placing to ensure correct alignment. I also recommending the use of decal set so markings conform to uniform creases etc.

This is a great new product from Tamiya, and I hope to see other similar offering to follow.

Highly Recommended.

Thanks to The Hobby Company for the sample www.hobbyco.com

Andrew Judson



ZVEZDA

1:35 SCALE SOVIET

PARATROOPERS, AFGHANISTAN

ITEM NO. 3619

This new release from Zvezda is a modern-ish subject in the form of Soviet Paratroopers from the Afghanistan campaign 1979 to 1988.

Inside the box you will find six figures and, in keeping with the latest stuff from Zvezda, they are very nicely moulded with minimal mould seams.

The detail is very good such as the radio operators' helmet liner and the weapons. I particularly like the taped together magazines on the AK-74s. The weapons are supplied separately or with hands moulded to them, which is a neat idea as it is sometimes tricky to fit them when a figure is built.

The poses of the figures are 'action' ones but not what I would call over the top and are quite nicely balanced.

The painting instructions are adequate with colours from Testor's Model Master range only but I would strongly recommend using the box art as a guide as it is that good.

This is a great set and would make a nice little diorama in its own right, or if you have the space with a 1/35 Mil-8 or Mil-24 helicopter. Zvezda is putting out some lovely figure sets at the moment and for modellers of Soviet era soldiers it is highly recommended.

Highly Recommended.

Thanks to The Hobby Company for the sample www.hobbyco.com

Andy King



DRAGON

1:35 SCALE

39-45 SERIES - PANZERGRENADEIER, ARNHEM 1944

ITEM NO. 6648

New from Dragon is this set of SS Panzergrenadiers from the Arnhem battle during 1944. The set features two wounded Panzer crewmen, a grenadier in a late pattern camouflage smock and another in the M1943-45 tunic and trousers. Three of the figures are nicely posed but the other is a bit exaggerated.

All figures feature some nice detail and its good to see the later uniforms represented such as the smock having three foliage loops and M1943 tunic without pleats on the pockets.

Quality of moulding is good however there are die-lines present on the back of some of the figures and will need attention as they will show through a coat of paint. All the heads are one-piece mouldings and not the dreaded multi-part things that were difficult to assemble with earlier Gen 2 figure sets.

A variety of personal equipment and weapons is included, although the choice is limited to Kar 98 rifles and MP40 machine guns. These are Gen2 mouldings and well detailed with plenty to go on the figures and even more to go in the spares box.

Painting instructions on the back of the box are once again limited to a smaller picture of the artwork from the front although there are examples of the different camouflage patterns featured. Colour call outs are from Testor's Model Master, Gunze Mr Color and Hobby Color paint ranges.

This is another good set from Dragon apart from the one figure with a slightly suspect stance. It will prove useful for diorama builders, especially the two wounded crewmen.

Recommended.

Thanks to The Hobby Company for the sample www.hobbyco.com

Andy King



DRAGON

1:35 SCALE ALLIED FORCE, ETO 1944

ITEM NO. 6653

This new set from Dragon is (for a change) one of Allied soldiers from the European Theatre of Operations during 1944. It features one British and three American figures; the solitary Brit being a Royal Marine Commando and three US infantrymen. All the poses are fairly relaxed and the detail is very crisp which will look great painted. Personal equipment and weapons are Dragon's Gen2 standard and enough to equip the four figures, but don't think you'll be topping up the spares box with many leftovers. I particularly liked the M1 Carbine and Garand rifles with alternative parts for an open or closed breech. The camouflage netting on one of the helmets is nicely rendered too.

Moulding quality is good with only light mould seams and very little flash but again there are die or cooling lines present that will need to be filled as they will be visible under a coat of paint. Mr Surfacer will be ideal for this job.

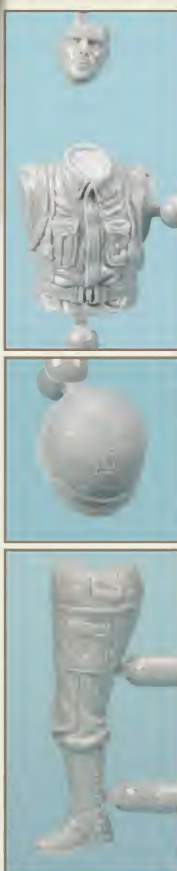
Assembly and painting instructions are printed on the back of the box with Model Master and Gunze colour call outs, but I would use the sublime artwork of Ron Volstad on the front as a reference.

Personally, I really like this set as the detail is great although it is a bit of an odd mix in terms of the choice of figures. Here's hoping that Dragon eventually releases a full set of British Commandos instead of teasing us with just one!

Recommended.

Thanks to The Hobby Company for the sample www.hobbyco.com

Andy King



MIG PRODUCTIONS

1:35 SCALE

US NAVY SEAL VOL 2

ITEM NO. MP35-331

It is always nice when new modern figure subjects hit the market, and this one will not disappoint. Mig Productions has just released a new US Navy Seal kitted up on operations in either Iraq or Afghanistan – or perhaps even Pakistan! You choose. The pose is nice, as if he is moving with caution about to make someone's day a bad one.

Inside the clear plastic package are thirteen very clean and crisply detailed parts, needing only removal from holding blocks and minimal clean up. The spec'd up M4 is quite impressive, though care will be needed when removing of its holding block with seven holding locations.

The head on this figure is also very impressive with the level of detail in the helmet and comms gear, straps, night vision and the face itself.

I think this is one great figure well worth adding to the collection, and I look forward to future similar items from Mig Productions.

Highly Recommended.

Thanks to Mig Productions for the sample www.migproductions.com

Andrew Judson

MIG PRODUCTIONS

1:35 SCALE M4 SHERMAN FIELD ARMOUR UPGRADE • ITEM NO. MIG35373

The Sherman was the undisputed armour king of the Pacific Islands during the Second World War. There was not a Japanese tank or artillery piece that was a serious threat to the iconic M4 family. However, the Sherman was still vulnerable to suicide attacks by Japanese infantry. As a result, Pacific Shermans were often seen with a range of improvised protection measures.

Comprising eleven parts in cream coloured resin, plus a photo-etched fret and a loop of wire, Mig Productions' latest conversion is a Pacific Sherman Field Armour Upgrade.

The resin parts include several double lengths of M3 Stuart three-bar cleat track to go around the turret, plus armour for the sides and skirts. Smaller armour sections are also supplied for the front corners of the hull. The photo-etched fret provides parts for a protective cover over the engine deck vents. This is made up from a frame and separate covers, so you may show one cover on and one off, or partially displaced if you wish.

A separate frame is also supplied for the top of the transmission cover. This mounts two sections of resin tracks as additional frontal armour.

Cleverly, the photo-etched fret also includes a stencil for painting the unique marking "The 392nd Avenger" on the side of the vehicle.

This conversion is designed for Dragon's M4 Composite Hull kit.

Mig Productions' 1:35 scale Pacific Sherman Field Armour Upgrade looks to be quite a straightforward conversion, but will transform the appearance of your Dragon composite hull M4. The weathering potential is almost limitless too!

Highly Recommended.
Thanks to Mig Productions for the sample www.migproductions.com
Brett Green



MINIART

1:35 SCALE SOVIET FIELD KITCHEN KP-42 KIT NO: 35061

MiniArt is currently producing some of the most diverse and interesting kits of WWII subjects, and they certainly are not your typical run of the mill. This new release continues this trend for Allied modelling enthusiasts.

The kit comes packed in a sturdy box with eye catching box art. Inside are four sprues totalling 144 parts and a well-presented set of instructions with painting references and recommendations.

The main sprue "A" contains the majority of the parts for assembling the trailer and cooker. Detail is very nicely done with crisp moulding and no flash in sight. The ejector pin marks have been mostly kept to a minimum and those present will either be out of general view or relatively easy to deal with.

Sprue "C" and its derivatives contain the parts to construct the tyre wheels for the trailer.

The tyre parts are moulded as individual thin sections that are sandwiched together to give each tyre a truly defined tread pattern. The wheels and associated hub detail are also nicely moulded.

The final sprue "B" holds all the parts for the figures, their personal gear and accessories for the field kitchen. The figures are well moulded for plastic with just a hint of flash in a few places but nothing that can't be sorted out and the faces being are very nicely animated. This is a great example of a manufacturer who is confident in their abilities to offer variety in the scale modelling world, and very competent in their skills at to do so.

Highly Recommended.

Available from Creative Models Limited
www.creativemodels.co.uk

Ross Ferro



THE AIRBRUSH COMPANY

AIRBRUSH CLEANING BRUSHES

Tired of rolling up tissue paper into a small point, dipping in solvent and trying desperately to clean out your airbrush nozzle, only to find some of the paint and tissue stuck inside? Then these cleaning brushes are just for you!

In a set of five sizes that should suit different brands of airbrush, the bristles are stiff enough to remove paint residue but soft enough not to damage airbrush parts.

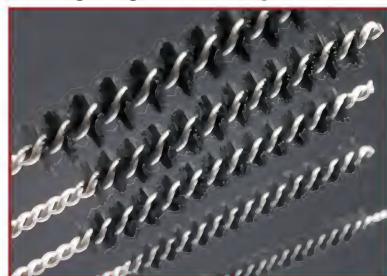
I have used the smallest brush on an Iwata CR nozzle and it fits nicely. I also like that the brushes are long enough to clean through to where the needle goes.

The composition of the brushes should withstand some fairly strong solvents. This is a much needed piece of kit and highly recommended to all airbrush users.

Highly Recommended. Available from The Airbrush Company

www.airbrushes.net

Andy King





ICM HOLDING

1:35 SCALE 7.62 CM PAK 36(R) WITH GERMAN CREW • KIT NO: 35801

This kit from ICM is an interesting combination. It appears that they have tried to cover all their bases by offering a Russian captured weapon in the hands of the German Army.

The kit is packed in a fairly sturdy box with some reasonably produced box art. For my money it's quite often the box art that says to me "You just have to buy me!" Inside the box are two just two sprues totalling 159 parts with a very simple set of instructions, brief history of the weapon and painting guide for the gun and the figures.

The main sprue contains all the parts for the 7.62cm gun and these appear to be well moulded overall with just a few sink marks on the lower chassis for the wheels and a few ejector pins to be dealt with, the most conspicuous being on the inside of the gun shield. The barrel is moulded with a split down the centreline and this will take some time and effort to remove.

The last sprue contains the parts for the figures and their associated weapons and personal gear. The parts appear to be well moulded with again only the faintest traces of flash. The figures faces are nicely rendered for this type of medium and the figures overall look well animated and should come up nicely with some careful painting.

This is a nicely done kit and some care during construction will result in an interesting interpretation of this weapon.

Recommended.

Thanks to ICM for the review sample.

Ross Ferro



EDUARD

1:35 SCALE LEAVES FERN / COLOUR • VITEM NO. 36160

Talking about Eduard Company from Czech Republic is the same as talking about accuracy, flawless detail and innovation. As usual, all of this is what you will get in some of their last sets like their new 1:35 Leaves Fern / Colour, item no. 36160. The set is absolutely fantastic and will, for certain, improve any diorama or vignette.

In fact is hard to believe that the fern leaves are made of metal! The detail is awesome and the colours are a top match for natural vegetation. All we have to do is carefully cut the leaves and just glue them into the desired spot.

This set is highly recommended to modellers who wants that extra touch of realism in their work.

Highly Recommended.

Available online from Eduard www.eduard.cz



GREATWALL HOBBY

1:35 SCALE GERMAN WWII MAYBACH HL42 TRKMS ENGINE • ITEM NO. L3522

GreatWall Hobby has released this gem of a complete engine and transmission for those of you wishing to put something in the empty engine bay of your SwS half-track. As we have come to expect from this fairly new manufacturer, all the parts are crisply moulded in grey styrene and very nicely detailed.

The parts count on the two sprues is around the very reasonable 60 mark with a small fret of photo-etch, so an evening's work should see it built.

The only extras you may wish to add are the wiring and fuel pipes. Instructions are printed on the back of the box and seem easy enough to follow. Colour call outs are from both the Gunze Mr Hobby and Mr Colour paint ranges.

The model is obviously designed to fit the GWH range of SwS as there are location marks on the inside of the chassis, but it should fit Italeri or Bronco kits too.

Accuracy wise there, are some issues, the most obvious being the extra filler cap on top of the engine (there should only be two small ones), the sump pan should be a flat plate and an oil tank is missing from the right side.

These will be relatively simple to correct but GWH should have done their homework a bit more. There is absolutely no excuse now to not open up the engine bay on your half track especially with the very reasonable price. It would also make a great cargo for the back of vehicle too!

Highly Recommended. Available from The Airbrush Company www.airbrushes.net

Andy King



MIG PRODUCTIONS

ENAMEL WASHES - DEEP GREEN, EARTH AND WOOD AGEING SOLUTION

Mig Productions has added several new washes to its growing range of finishing and weathering products.

This latest batch includes Deep Green, Earth and a dark red-brown shade labelled as Wood Ageing Solution.

These washes are enamel based, so they will have to be applied over acrylic paint or at the very least over an acrylic top coat. Mig's washes are a bit thicker than their Filter range, so the impact will be more noticeable. The instructions suggest that the wash should be allowed to dry on the model for around 15 minutes before the excess is wiped off. A more precise application of the wash around structural features might then be applied with a very fine brush.

The Deep Green and Earth Washes looks ideal for Allied and Soviet finishes, while the Wood Ageing solution will be handy for timber but also for any job requiring a dark brown shading.

All Recommended.

Thanks to Mig Productions for the sample www.migproductions.com

Brett Green





Graham Tetley delves into Dragon's new 1:35 scale SU-85M, and discovers that it is more than a simple reworking of the earlier SU-85 kit.

SELF-PROPELLED STOP-GAP

The SU-85 was a World War II Soviet self-propelled gun based on the chassis of the T-34 medium tank. Earlier Soviet self-propelled guns were meant to serve as either assault guns, such as the SU-122, or as mobile anti-tank weapons. The SU-85 fell into the latter category. The designation SU-85 is derived as follows: 'SU' stands for the Russian: Samokhodnaya Ustanovka - self-propelled carriage, while "85" signifies the bore of the vehicle's armament, the 85 mm D-5T gun.

The SU-85 was a modification of the earlier SU-122 self-propelled howitzer, essentially replacing the 122 mm M-30S howitzer of the SU-122 with a D-5T high-velocity 85 mm antitank gun. The 85 mm gun was effective against Panther and Tiger tanks at long range. The vehicle was small, highly mobile and well armoured.

SU-85 production started in mid-1943, with the first vehicles reaching their units by August. When the up-gunned T-34-85 medium tank entered mass production in the spring of 1944, there was no point in continuing production of a tank destroyer without superior firepower, so SU-85 production was stopped in late 1944 after 2,050 vehicles had

been produced. It was replaced on the production lines by the SU-100 tank destroyer, armed with the more powerful 100 mm D-10S gun.

There were two versions. The basic SU-85 had a fixed commander's cupola with a rotating periscope and three vision blocks; while the improved SU-85M had the same casemate as the SU-100, with a commander's cupola as used on the T-34-85.*

Dragon's latest addition to the T-34 family is more than a simple re-working of their older 1:35 SU-85 kit. We have approximately 570 plastic parts and another (approximately) 180 parts on the etched fret, as well as a metal barrel for the main gun and a length of wire for the tow cable. Markings are provided for six vehicles - five Soviet and one captured machine. A small, clear plastic, sprue gives you the periscopes and a headlight lense. Strangely, the periscopes are called out during assembly but you are advised to use part C14, a normal grey plastic part.

There are plenty of spare parts in the box and the options are there to build an SU-85M or an early SU-100. The main differences are the gun mantlets, barrels (plastic for the SU100, metal for the SU-85) and front

fenders. A lot of the plastic detailing can be replaced by items from the brand-new etched fret, or just left as it is if you prefer. The tracks are individual link Magic Tracks, plus you get the grouzers for stowage on four separate sprues.

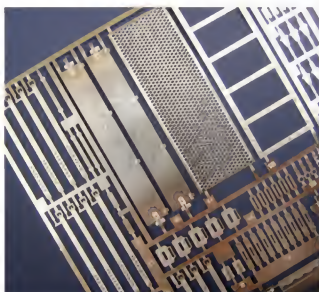
Detailing is nice and crisp throughout with no flash on my sample, plus there will be no visible knock-out pin marks due to some nifty mould-making. Optional fuel tanks are provided to fit the model out with pristine or dented items. The fighting compartment is detailed by the addition of separate armour plates for the front, back and sides. One thing to be wary of is that the instructions here are not clear at all and you could be forgiven for building the kit without attaching the fighting compartment sides. The rest of the instructions are not as confusing though.

In summary, this is a very complete package. Detail is typical Dragon and the main bits fit together with no major issues. This is a sound kit with no need for any aftermarket detailing. It gets a hearty thumbs up from me. ■

Dragon kits are distributed in the UK by The Hobby Company Limited www.hobbyco.net



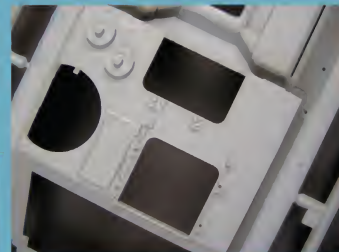
SU-85 fenders with some wear and tear.



The photo-etched grille and louvers are a big improvement over the original release.



Magic Tracks - great stuff!



Detail on the fighting compartment roof.



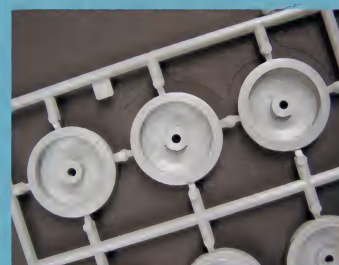
Detail on the front glacis.



Pre-dented fuel tanks.



Just need a resin engine to make the most of this!



Main road wheels.



Excellent weld detailing on the armour for the cupola bulge.



Italeri re-releases their 1:35 scale M8 Greyhound armoured car. **Graham Tetley** takes another look at the contents from a 21st century perspective, and compares this kit to Tamiya's

A SIX-LEGGED DOG

The M8 was a 6 x 6 armoured car produced by the Ford Motor Company during World War II. It was used by U.S. and British troops in Europe and the Far East until the end of the war. The vehicle was widely exported and still remains in service in some third world countries.

In British service, the M8 was known as the Greyhound. The British Army found it too lightly armoured, particularly the hull floor where anti-tank mines could easily penetrate. The expedient field solution was to line the floor of the crew compartment with sandbags. However, the M8 was produced in such large quantities so that, coupled with its off-road capabilities, this shortcoming was largely overlooked. The M8 Greyhound could virtually go anywhere, which made it a great support element for advancing American and British armoured columns.*

Continuing their re-release of back catalogue items, Italeri has made their 1:35 scale M8 Greyhound kit available again.

The kit comprises 195 parts moulded in olive drab plastic.

The mouldings are clean and crisp with only some very minor flash on a handful of parts. Some visible surfaces have ejector pin marks but these are few and far between. Detail is sharp and very fine in some places, average in others. I built this kit when it first came out in 1998 and it went together with no surprises.

A basic hull interior is provided that has the driver's controls, bulkheads, rifles and the instrument panel. No radio is provided though. The turret interior is quite complete with a very acceptable gun and breech, ammunition stowage, turret turning mechanism, crew seats and small arms. All of this goes into a one-piece turret shell that has a very restrained cast texture on it. I actually prefer this part to the Tamiya two-piece turret as there is no risk of join lines or loss of detail in removing them. The cast texture is continued onto the gun mantlet, which also has casting numbers molded in place. To finish the turret off you get some bags and bedrolls that are quite passable, as well as the skate ring for the .50 cal machine gun.



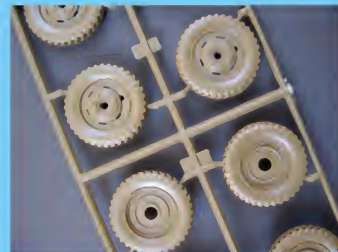
Kit-supplied stowage.



The one-piece main turret means that there is less risk of visible join marks after assembly.



Detail on the upper hull. Those front hatches are moulded shut.



The injection moulded road wheels and sidewall detail.



The rear panel features some lovely detail.



The .50 cal and its mount might better be replaced.



A simple transmission is moulded to the bottom of the body.



Nicely depicted suspension springs.



The front of the turret features really nice cast texture.



More nice texture and casting numbers on the mantlet.

* Historical background courtesy of Wikipedia.



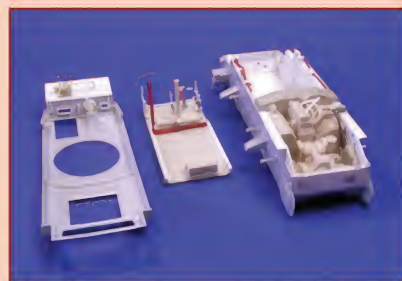
FEAR OF FINISHING

Have you ever looked forward to something so much and then when it happens it is almost a letdown? Modelling is a journey of sorts. You get excited about the next project with thoughts of grandeur and the outstanding results that you may achieve. You gather your references, start the model, overcome building issues, and then something happens. You either get distracted and slow down or stop all together. Is it because you want the build to continue? Or are you afraid of finishing?

I know a really great modeller that has a whole range of models that are just a coat of paint away from being complete. I kid you not, his models are masterworks in every sense of the word, and yet he won't finish. I put this to him a few months

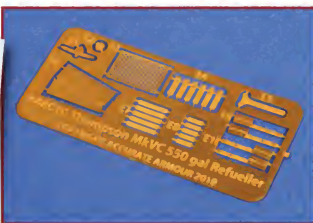
back and his response was (in my view) surprising. He told me point blank he was afraid he might stuff it up with painting! I know all of us have fears - mine is painting a natural metal aircraft - but, dude, you need to finish!

For him, though, the journey begins and ends with the building. I find this frustrating. I know, I have had these fears and still have some models in my "to be completed pile", but I find when I try and start them again my skills have also moved on, I often find fault with my build and detailing style also and, as a result, I know, in all reality they will never be complete. To complicate matters even further, if you don't paint and complete a model, your finishing skills become stale and out of date. Modelling is a dynamic animal and in my view you



need to start and finish one or two models at a time, otherwise, you will never get anything done. And on that note, I'm off to the paint booth!

Until next time *Luke Pitt*



ACCURATE ARMOUR

THOMPSON MK-VC 3 WHEELED FUELLER • KIT NO. K48010

This is the first Accurate Armour 1:48 scale kit that has graced these pages and I must say from the outset that it is a classy and very complete package. The Thompson 3 Wheeled Fueller is a unique and interesting vehicle of which hundreds were made. The Mk Vc was a product of the Thompson Brothers of England and was a small three-wheeled, airfield-based refuelling vehicle, powered by a Ford 10hp petrol engine. It had a three forward speed and one reverse speed gearbox and a chain driven rear axle. The three-wheeled, low-slung design made it easier to get close to aircraft for refuelling. And although it looked fast with the profile of a dragster, it was very slow in reality.

The kit is presented in a stout white box with the image of a built up model adorning the lid. An eight page instruction booklet is included that is both well written and informative. 35 very well cast parts are included; together with a photo-etched fret with 23 parts and a decal sheet and length of flexible refuelling hose. The main body, which is basically the fuel tank, is the largest casting and is cleverly designed. The rear driver station has a panel that sits on top of this station so no detail is lost. I was surprised how large this vehicle was being, roughly same length as a T-34!

I am greatly impressed with this release as it is unique, highly detailed and a very complete package. Highly Recommended.

Available online from Accurate Armour www.accurate-armour.com

Luke Pitt



MINIMAN FACTORY

M1008 CUCV • KIT NO. MMF 48002

I reviewed the first release from this company in issue 60 and this new kit is a variation of that, being the pick-up version. In summary, the model looks to be a simplified and pantographed down copy of their 1:35 scale kit. The wheels for example have an outstanding tread pattern and even come complete with a Goodyear logo on the tyre sidewall.

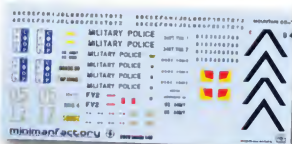
The resin parts are wonderfully cast and show no imperfections what so ever.

A very well done photo-etched fret and decal sheet are included with over six vehicles marking choices included. The bull bar is of particular note as it is made from laser cut cardboard and is both well detailed and superbly executed. The clear parts are die-cut printed acetate sheet.

I made mention in my first review that the instructions were far from perfect. In this release, however, they are much better and come with a vehicle history, expanded construction sequences and a colour guide. In my opinion, this is one of the best 1:48 scale aftermarket vehicles that I have reviewed this year. Highly Recommended.

Available online from Miniman Factory www.minimanfactory.com

Luke Pitt



Luke Pitt hosts MMI's examination of the growing world of 1:48 scale military models, figures and accessories.

MMI 1:48 Scale Q&A with Master Modeller Bob Batdorf

Bob Batdorf is a Department Manager with a large grocery store chain in the American state of Pennsylvania. He has been modelling for 45 years and over the last 25 years has mastered and made models for many well known companies. His master work has featured in the back catalogue of firms as diverse as J.Peddinghaus, Accurate Armour, Verlinden Productions and TWOM. Currently he does masters for Tank Workshop. He tells me that he used to work in a variety of scales but that now he has narrowed them down now to 1:48 and 1:35. Bob really encompasses what I would describe as a complete set of skills. Not only, is he a fine modeller but he can translate those skills in to mould making and creating a master that can be built by virtually anyone. It is a great pleasure to have him with us this month.

THE INTERVIEW

Luke: Hi Bob. Good to have you with us. Can you tell our readers what motivates you to do masters and what is the process involved?

Bob: *My main motivation is just to have fun and relax doing my hobby. I guess you would say that mastering resin kits is my main hobby now. Heck, I can't remember the last time I actually finished a model! The process involved in making a master is somewhat complex in that accuracy and ease of assembly for the customer is my main goal. First off, when I receive a request from a company, I try to thoroughly research the project which can take anywhere from a week to a few months. Then I examine the base kit and it's inaccuracies and how the conversion or accessory set is supposed to fit. This is important, as when most people have to cut up a base kit to get a resin conversion to fit, they tend to sometimes get frustrated and that opens up a whole new can of worms. I'm a firm believer in maximizing ease of assembly. When building the master you must also figure out how it is all supposed to go together in the end which means parts breakdown is also crucial, in the end the resin company personnel must also set up the parts for moulding and casting so I have to minimize those headaches.*

Luke: Having cast your masters up yourself in the past, can you explain the process involved here?, I understand that making a master for production purposes is a little different than say making a model for yourself?

Bob: *I have always used the low budget type of moulding and casting methods and, through experimentation, have found ways to yield very good results. I've never used pressure casting and rarely ever degassed RTV to make a mould. Through these methods I've always managed to keep costs down and give customers a nice resin kit or conversion for a modest price. To explain these methods I could probably chew up a few pages in this magazine. To make things easier I'll be starting a section in my website which will teach people what these methods are and how to use them. Of course, making a production master is sometimes just as complex as making parts for yourself. Most of it depends on what you want to cast, how you want it cast and how many you need. For items like tank turrets and hulls I prefer two-piece "plunger" moulds. This means that you sandwich a part between a male and female RTV mould to make a hollow cast larger part.*

Luke: Interesting comments Bob, I'm sure our readers were, for the most part unaware of the difficulties involved. Do you have a particular field of interest you would like to follow?

Bob: *Not really. I really enjoy military modelling and have taken up a lot of interest in the 1:48 scale arena in the last two years. Of course, once in a while I will sculpt and paint a fantasy figure in 75mm or 90mm scale or build a model Hot Rod in 1:25 scale. It keeps a person from getting a bad case of modeller's burnout. I highly recommend that everyone try it sometime.*

Luke: I know this can be a tricky question, but who do you admire most in the 1:48 scale modelling community?

Bob: *Touchy subject. Can I plead the Fifth Amendment? To be honest, 1:48 modellers are some of the most friendly and helpful people I have ever had the pleasure of meeting and dealing with. "Rivet Counters" are very rare in that community and instead of totally bashing something they all pitch-in together to find friendly solutions to aid everyone in building better models. Through my work in 1:48 scale and the old Iron Division line I have made many new friends such as Bruce Culver, George Bradford of AFV news, Jay Galbriez of Tank Workshop and many other great modellers.*

Luke: Good answer - very diplomatic! Okay, here is another tricky one. Who do you admire in terms of master model making and your thoughts on the process of pantographing down larger kits to 1:48?

Bob: *Everyone has their talents and there are many fantastic people out there doing some wonderful work so I would have to honestly say, everyone! I do wish that the plastic kit manufacturers would get their heads out of the places that they are stuck in. 1:48 scale is an area with some very great potential - smaller size but still large enough to get some fantastic detailing in and very realistic paint jobs. You remember what happened in the model aircraft area sometime ago and now look at what is the major scale in that area and why!*

Luke: I know you're a busy man so one last question. What are your thoughts on 1:48 and what should we all do to make it the premium scale?

Bob: *Again, in my view, 1:48 scale offers more bang for your buck! My advice to all fellow 1:48 scale modellers is, BUY MORE KITS whether they are plastic, resin or photo-etch. Sales are what people like Mr. Tamiya and the other company owners take notice of most. And also, support your aftermarket people. Maybe more of these die-hard 1:35 scale folks should look into 1:48 scale a lot closer!*

Luke: Bob, are there any surprises coming up from you in the future?

Bob: *Well, you know one of them. Of course the rest depends on what I'm asked to do. There is still a lot I want to add to my website and this winter there will be quite a few surprises there as far as information and techniques go.*

Luke: Thanks for your time Bob. I admire your skill and the models you have mastered. Bob's website may be found here - www.tots48.net



Preview

KENGI 1:48 SCALE ROLLS-ROYCE ARMoured CAR

Kenji's brand new resin 1:48 scale Rolls-Royce armoured car should be available by the time you read this issue. The kit comes with two turrets - the 39/40 and 41 type.



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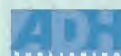
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TPZ 1 Fuchs A4, Afghanistan

Andrew Judson builds this interesting vehicle based on the 1:35 scale Revell kit.



TOPLESS TWENTY

We ran out of room in this issue, but next time for sure! Kev Smith builds Tamiya's 1:35 scale M20 scout car in a heavily weathered winter scheme.

PREDATOR ON PATROL

Trumpeter's 1:35 scale German E-100 Super Heavy Tank by Jose Brito.



FOR YOUR SAFETY

Don't forget, when using solvents such as glues, paints, thinners and cleaning agents, always ventilate your work area thoroughly and wear a face mask.

When using power tools, side cutters or any tool that can suddenly break or create high-speed airborne particles, wear approved eye protectors with hard, clear lenses. Please always model in safety!



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DRAGON'S 1:35 SCALE TYPE 2 KA-MI JAPANESE AMPHIBIOUS TANK

Last night Luke Pitt knocked on the door and brought in a plain cardboard box with an intriguing pile of parts.

This was an early set of the production sprues from Dragon's forthcoming 1:35 scale Type 2 Ka-Mi Japanese Amphibious Tank.

The kit as we have it comprises 189 parts in grey plastic, approx. 60 "Magic Track" single links, 22 etched brass parts on a single fret, 8 part in clear styrene, and two lengths of flexible DS track.

The sprues appear to be of full production quality, but the instructions, decals and box are not yet ready.

The hull is split into upper and lower halves. The lower tub has sponson covers built in.

The first thing to strike me was the vehicle's size. I usually expect Japanese tanks to be tiny, but this one is relatively big - perhaps Panzer III size and bulky to go with it.

Closer inspection revealed the delicate detail moulded to the major parts. The weld beads are especially noteworthy. All hatches are moulded separately and may be posed open. A basic level of interior detail is provided including a nice breech for the main 37mm gun, and a bunch of circular handles, although these lack the characteristic scalloped grips seen in reference photos. The Type 97 Light Machine Gun is a beautiful one-piece moulding.

The upper turret is a one-piece moulding with excellent hinge, spring, weld and bolt detail plus admirably thin edges at the hatch opening.

The traverse ring on the lower turret part features fine teeth moulded in place.

Running gear is simple but once again beautifully detailed. The road wheels even feature the figure-of-eight locking wire between pairs of bolts as raised mouldings.

The cast texture on the final drive housings is well done too.

There is a small bag of gorgeous individual Magic Track links, but with only around 60 pieces these will not be even close enough for a single track run. It is likely that these will not be included with the initial kit release. The production kit will be supplied with full-length flexible DS tracks. On the upside, these are remarkably detailed, boasting detail right down to the holes in the guide teeth and track pins; and they will be fast to install.

On the downside, it will be next to impossible to reproduce the heavy drape seen on the upper runs on the real vehicle using the one-piece tracks.

Photo-etched parts include the perforated exhaust cover and wheel grommets.

I test fitted the upper and lower hulls, as well as the turret parts. They appear to be a nice tight fit and free of gaps or steps.

Dragon really seems to be onto a winner with this vehicle. The relatively modest parts count has not compromised exterior detail, which is exquisite. That big interior screams out for after-market attention both in the fighting compartment and in the engine bay. I am sure it won't be long before a resin company obliges.

Some of the parts - particularly on the clear sprue - point to other variants in the works too.

Luke grabbed the sprues back before the flash tubes had cooled. He tells me that this will be his next build.

I look forward to seeing Dragon's Type 2 Ka-Mi finished in Luke's inimitable style!

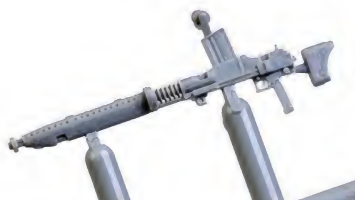
Dragon kits are distributed in the UK by The Hobby Company Limited www.hobbyco.net



The nicely detailed upper hull has subtly rendered weld beads



Check out the hinge and bolt detail on the Type 2's small turret.



The detail on the one-piece Type 97 Light Machine Gun is exquisite.



The turret ring is moulded with tiny teeth in place.



The road wheels are super detailed too. Note the crossed "wire" reinforcements between the pairs of bolt heads.



Cast texture on the final drive housings is well done.



A handful of individual "Magic" tracks were supplied with this pre-release set, but they are probably not going to be included when the kit hits the hobby shop shelves.



Full-length DS tracks will be included with the commercial release. These are beautifully detailed but may be tricky to depict draped on the upper run.

ERRATA DRAGON AND ZVEZDA DISTRIBUTION

I incorrectly attributed distribution of Dragon and Zvezda kits in the last issue of Model Military International. Please note that both Dragon and Zvezda kits are distributed in the United Kingdom by The Hobby Company Limited. Their website may be found at www.hobbyco.net I apologise for my error.



A modest photo-etched fret includes the perforated exhaust guard.



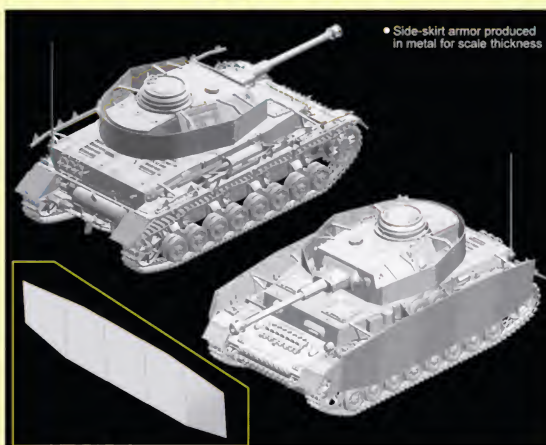
Clear parts suggest other versions will be on the way in the future.

Engineered for modeling enjoyment

Plastic parts with enhanced detail

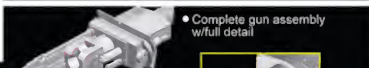
Unprecedented value

Ready for immediate assembly!



- Turret roof rendered w/turret-skirt armor brackets
- Turret-skirt and side-skirt armor plates can be installed separately

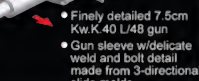
- One-piece 3-directional slide-molded turret



- Complete gun assembly w/full detail



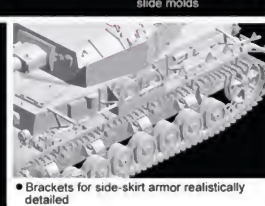
- Mantlet guard can be removed and gun unloaded as on real vehicle



- Finely detailed 7.5cm Kw.K.40 L/48 gun
- Gun sleeve w/delicate weld and bolt detail made from 3-directional slide molds



- One-piece upper hull made from 2-directional slide mold w/new engine-deck design



- Brackets for side-skirt armor realistically detailed



- Spare-track bracket on lower hull front



- Two types of side-skirt armor plate w/bolt detail



- Spare-wheel rack w/spare wheels on upper hull side



- 40cm Magic Tracks w/detail on both sides



- Complete MG w/workable ball mount



- Final-drive housing w/details on both sides
- Sprocket wheels w/breathtaking detail and multiple delicate parts



- Extendable jack w/separate parts



- Detailed towing-eye brackets w/separate parts



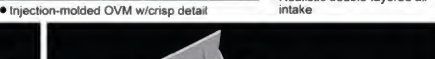
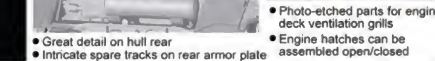
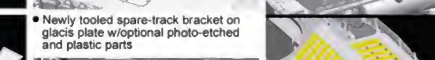
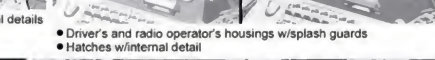
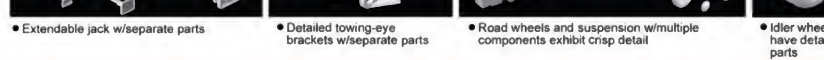
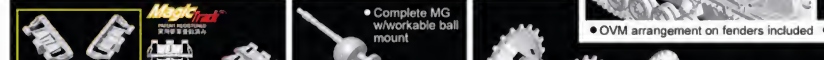
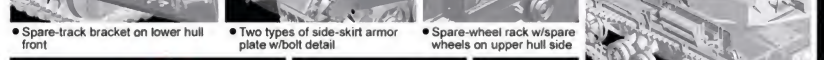
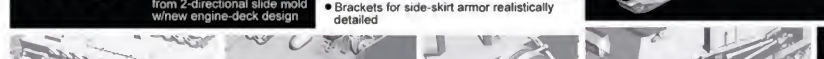
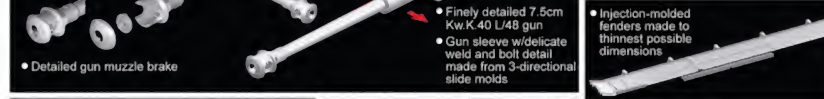
- Road wheels and suspension w/multiple components exhibit crisp detail



- Idler wheels have detailed parts



- One-piece lower hull made from slide molds
- Hull bottom fully detailed





Finnish Fusion

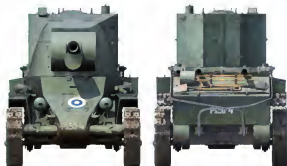
1/35 Finnish BT-42 Assault Gun Item 35318

The Finnish Army was certainly not well-equipped during WWII, but ingenuity enabled them to combat the formidable Russian Army with the limited weaponry they had available. Captured Russian tanks were often pressed into service and among these was the BT-7 Model 1937. This light tank served as the base for the creation of Finland's distinctive BT-42 assault gun, which featured a 114mm howitzer housed in a massive turret. The eighteen examples produced between 1942 and 1943 were initially deployed to attack Russian fortifications and later served in the defense of Vyborg during the Russian offensive in June 1944. Tamiya proudly releases this unique Finnish AFV to join the ever-growing 1/35 Scale Military Miniature Series line-up.



Recreated With Finnish Support

The Parola Armour Museum in Finland holds the world's only surviving BT-42, and their cooperation has led to a highly accurate model. Chassis details such as the front fenders, toolboxes, etc. which differed from the earlier BT-7 Model 1935 are all reproduced.



Depicts guide wheels and tracks from the BT-7 Model 1937.

Features assembly type tracks.

**1/35
SCALE**

Length: 157mm

Turret's rear hatch can be assembled in open or closed position.

1 crew figure & 3 types of markings included.



Photo-etched parts for engine cover and radiator grilles.

(Extra for First Production)
A B5-sized, full-color reference leaflet with BT-42 photos will be included.

Modeling the BT-42's Heritage

The Sturmgeschütz III Ausf.G, the BT-42's successor, as well as the BT-7 Model 1935, an earlier variant of the tank on which the BT-42 was based, are also available in Tamiya's 1/35 Scale MM Series line-up.

1/35 Scale Sturmgeschütz III Ausf.G "Finnish Army" (Item 35310)
1/35 Scale Russian Tank BT-7 Model 1935 (Item 35309)



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